

# HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP 2023 MASTER PLAN



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# Chapter 1

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## Introduction



## ***Purpose of the Master Plan***

Planning is a process that involves the conscious selection of policy choices relating to land use, growth, and physical development of the community. The Huron Charter Township Master Plan serves as a tool in the Township's planning efforts by clearly stating the goals and objectives of land use and development, and identifying strategies that the Township will pursue to achieve those goals. The Master Plan considers a number of community elements, including the social, economic, physical, and political factors that influence the land use decision process.

## ***How is the Plan to be used?***

1. The Plan serves as a statement of the Township's goals and policies for land use and establishes a framework that guides future development in the community.
2. The Plan aids in daily decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in the Plan guide the Planning Commission, Township Board, and other Township bodies in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements and other matters related to land use and development. The Plan provides a stable, long-term basis for decision-making providing for a balance of land uses specific to the character of Huron Charter Township
3. The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are made. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended) requires that the zoning ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote public health, safety, and general welfare. It is important to note that the Master Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other Township Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Map.
4. The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments supported by the Capital Improvements Plan. For example, public investments such as road or sewer and water improvements should be located in areas identified in the Plan as resulting in the greatest benefit to the Township and its residents.
5. Finally, the Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers, and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's direction for the future.

In summation, the Huron Charter Township Master Plan is the primary, officially adopted document that sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies. It is a long-range statement of general goals and policies aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the Township that complements the goals of nearby governmental units, wherever possible. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner that permits controlled growth. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning, and land use decisions are made.

## ***Historic Context***

This document represents a full amendment to the current Huron Charter Township Master Plan. Because communities are constantly changing, the information contained in a plan becomes outdated in time. As conditions change, so do opportunities and expectations for the future. It is therefore essential to periodically update the information contained in the Master Plan as well as re-evaluate its basic vision and implementation programs. Current State Legislation regarding Township Planning requires five (5) year reviews of the Master Plan. The review process will be discussed in more detail in the implementation section of the Plan.

## ***The Planning Process***

The process used to update the Plan consisted of four phases: background studies; evaluation of Township character and development capability; identification of goals, and policies; and plan development.

Background studies involving data inventory and analysis from Census data, existing reports, and field survey were gathered. Sound community planning cannot take place by itself. Many factors that exist must be considered when formulating plans for the future.

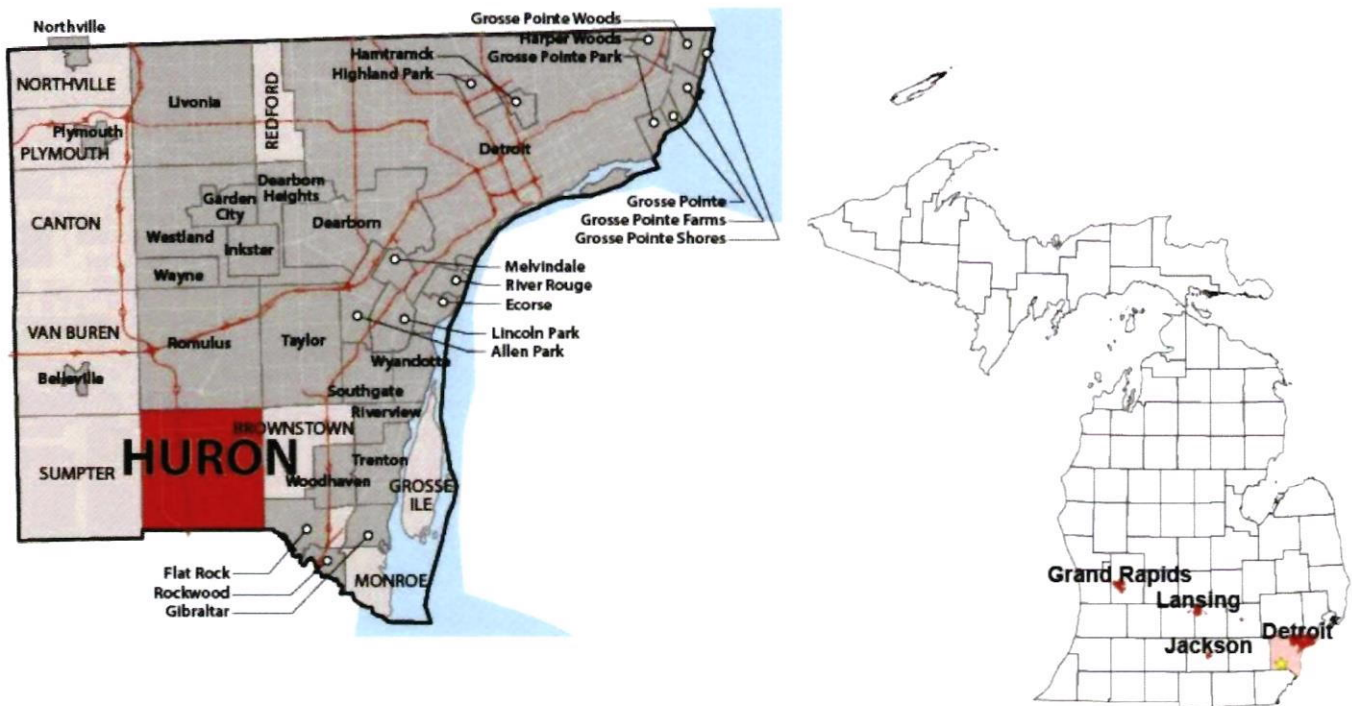


## ***Regional Setting***

Huron Charter Township is located in southeast Wayne County, Michigan, approximately 25 miles southwest of downtown Detroit, and 50 miles north of downtown Toledo, Ohio. Huron Township is roughly 36 square miles in size and is serviced by Interstate 275. I-275 also connects with I-75 and I-94, providing linkages between the community and the wider region.

Huron Charter Township is surrounded by Romulus to the north, Taylor to the northeast, Van Buren Township to the northwest, Supter Township to the west, and Brownstown Township and Flat Rock to the east. The Township is at the southern border of Wayne County, with Monroe County adjacent to the south. It is critical for a community to be aware of its neighbors' long-range goals and their potential impact. In the determination of an appropriate future land use arrangement for the Township, adjacent communities' plans must be considered in order to ensure that adjacent uses of land are compatible.

## County and Regional Planning



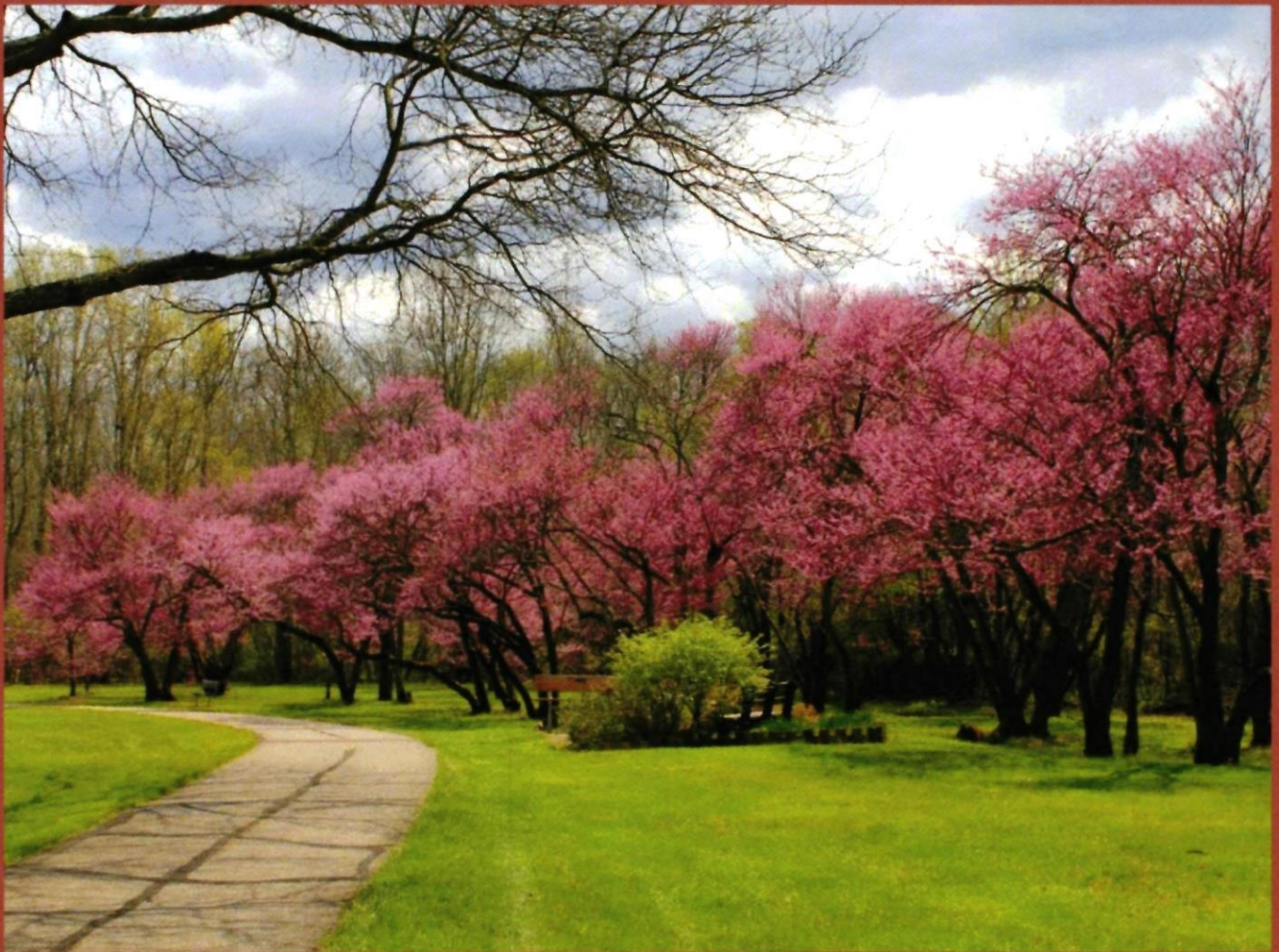
Huron Charter Township is located in the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) region, which encompasses the following seven counties: Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne. SEMCOG provides regional planning services and supports local government planning in the areas of environment, education, community and economic development, and transportation. SEMCOG is also a key resource for data about southeast Michigan, on topics ranging from manufactured housing and building permits to nonresidential development and existing land use. Community profiles and population and employment estimates can also be obtained through SEMCOG.

Wayne County's Economic Development Department provides countywide land use planning services, including advisory review of local zoning, and planning activities. The County's comprehensive plan for land use and development has not been updated in a few decades and is no longer used to guide planning efforts in the County; however, the Economic Development Department does maintain informal policies as a guide for County planning activities. Principal responsibilities of the department include business attraction and retention; administering loan programs in support of economic development efforts; international outreach; and housing and neighborhood redevelopment.

# Chapter 2

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## Background Studies



## ***Population and Housing Characteristics***

Population is one of the most critical indicators of future growth patterns and its impact on a community. Therefore, effective planning requires a firm grasp of trends in population growth not only in Huron Township, but also the immediate area of Metropolitan Detroit. Demographic analysis serves as an informational foundation for making decisions about what physical, social, and economic changes may occur in the future, which will help to support the long-term decisions recommended by the Master Plan. (Sources used for the information and data gathering were the U.S. Census, available information at the time of the update and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).

### ***Population***

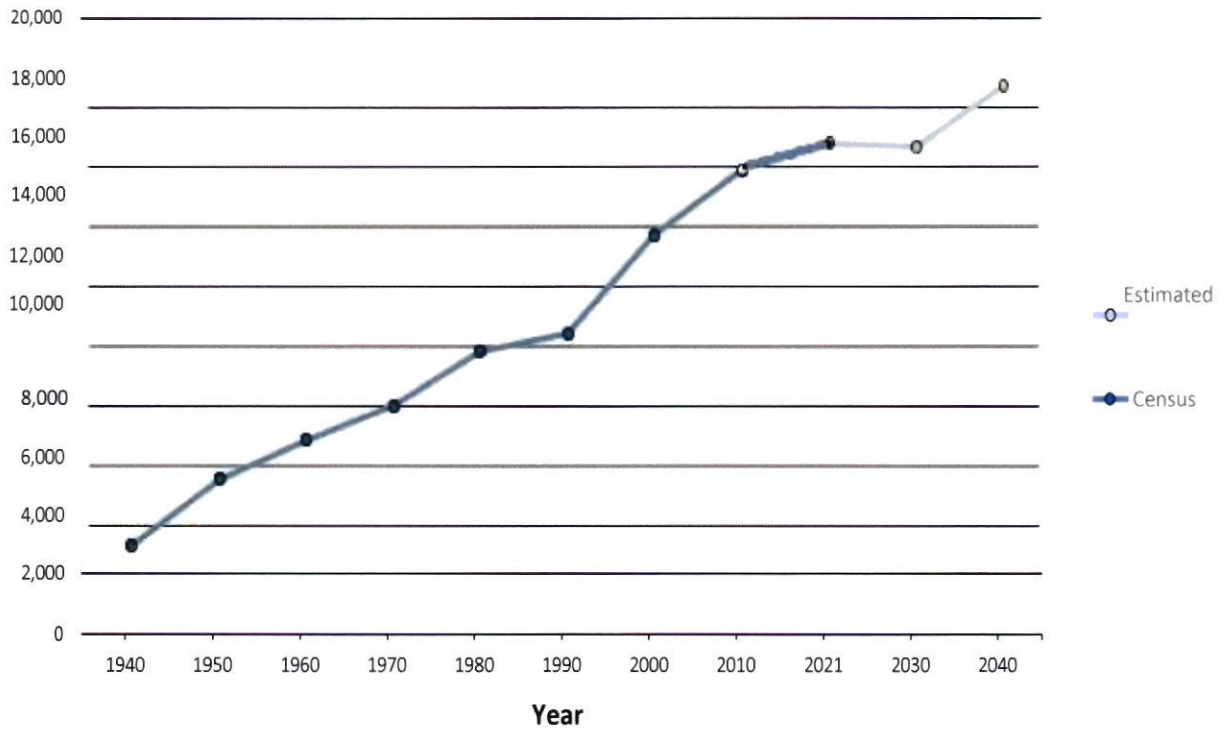
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2021, an estimated 16,785 people reside in Huron Township. This represents an increase of 906 people in the past decade and an increase of 5.71% from 2010. While the rate of growth has slowed compared to a decade ago (shown in Figure 1), the increase still continues a strong trend of people moving to and staying in Huron Township. Population increases can likely be attributed to people seeking rural refuge from densely developed suburbs (e.g., Livonia, Dearborn) and older urban areas (e.g., Ann Arbor, Lincoln Park), the magnetism of Huron Township’s Metroparks, strong rural heritage, and industrial and commercial employment opportunities.

**Table 1:**  
*Huron Township Historic Population Growth*

<b><i>Year</i></b>	<b><i>Population</i></b>	<b><i>Change</i></b>	<b><i>% Change</i></b>
<b>1940</b>	3,368	-	-
<b>1950</b>	5,558	2,190	65.02%
<b>1960</b>	6,884	1,326	23.86%
<b>1970</b>	8,030	1,146	16.65%
<b>1980</b>	9,849	1,819	22.65%
<b>1990</b>	10,447	598	6.07%
<b>2000</b>	13,737	3,290	31.49%
<b>2010</b>	15,879	2,142	15.59%
<b>2021</b>	<b>16,785</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>5.71%</b>
<b>2030 estimated</b>	<b>16,668</b>	<b>-117</b>	<b>-0.70%</b>
<b>2040 estimated</b>	<b>18,701</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>12.20%</b>

*Source: US Census & SEMCOG*

**Figure 1:**  
*Population Growth in Huron Township 1940-2040*



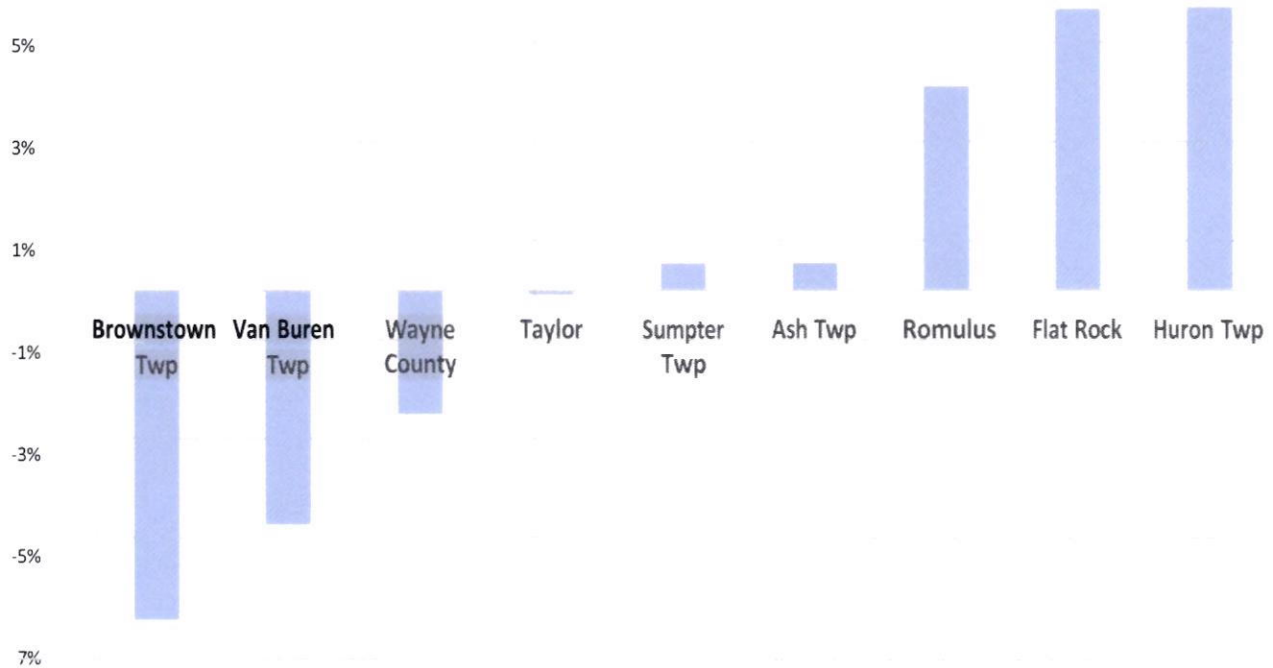
Source: U.S. Census

To put the growth depicted in Figure 1 and Table 2 in perspective, it is helpful to compare Huron Township’s growth with its neighboring communities. Table 2 reveals the following demographic trends in the Township and nearby communities. The highs and lows of these trends are as follows: Brownstown Township had the highest rate of growth, at 7.16%, between 2010 and 2021, while Huron Township had the second highest, at 5.71%. The City of Flat Rock, to the southeast, trailed closely behind Huron Township, with the third highest growth rate of 5.68%. Overall, Wayne County saw a decline of -2.51% during the period between 2010 and 2021, while the City of Taylor declined by only -0.10%

**Table 2:**  
*Comparative Population Growth Against Nearby Communities 2010-2021*

COMMUNITY	2010	2021	% Change 2010 - 2021
Huron Twp	15,879	16,785	5.71%
Ash Twp	7,783	7,826	0.55%
Sumpter Twp	9,549	9,601	0.54%
Brownstown Twp	30,627	32,820	7.16%
Van Buren Twp	28,821	30,257	4.98%
Romulus	23,989	24,977	4.12%
Taylor	63,131	63,071	-0.10%
Flat Rock	9,878	10,439	5.68%
Wayne County	1,820,584	1,774,816	-2.51%

**Figure 2:**  
*Comparative Population Growth Against Nearby Communities 2010-2021*



Source: U.S. Census

**Population Projection**

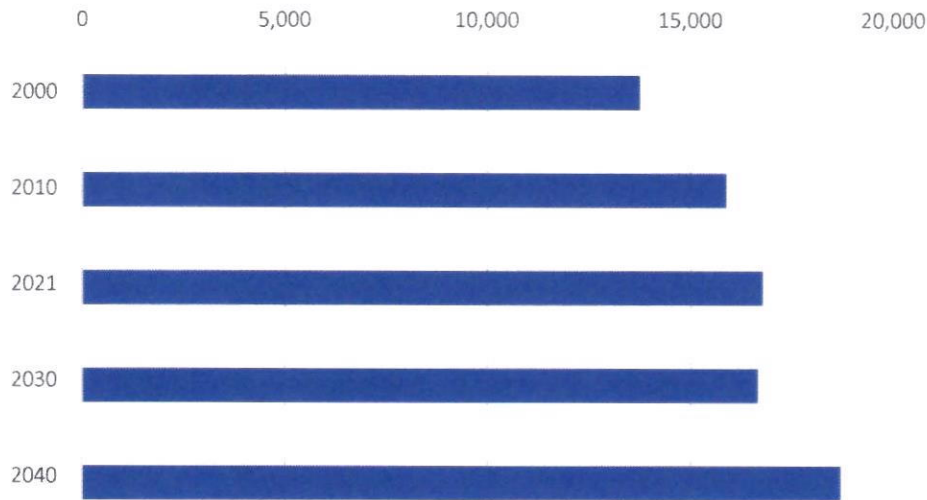
An accurate estimate of the future population allows the Township to carefully plan for infrastructure, municipal services, and future land use. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) prepares a 30-year population projection for communities in Southeast Michigan to assist with long-range planning efforts. The projection utilizes past trends, current residential development, and economic activity to estimate future population.

**Table 3:**  
*Forecast of Population, Households, and Employment from 2020-2045 for Huron Township*

	2020	2030	2040	2045	Change #	% Change
<b>Population</b>	16,944	16,668	18,701	19,901	2,957	17.45%
<b>Employment</b>	4,199	4,008	4,087	4,103	-112	-2.67%

Source: SEMCOG

**Figure 3:**  
*Population Projection for Huron Township 2000-2040*



*Source: SEMCOG*

SEMCOG’s projections show a slight decline in Huron Township’s population over the next decade, however, an overall increase in the decade following of almost 18%. A decrease in employment of 2.29% is projected by 2045. This decrease is likely attributed to the recent population loss in Wayne County and the pandemic recession that carried into the projections. A continuing decline in the country’s birthrate may explain a projected decrease in population, despite a projected increase in the number of households.

### ***Age Characteristics***

Another opportunity to measure change involves comparing the age distribution of a community over time. This assists planners in determining the type of housing demands and recreational facilities that may be needed. For example, if a sizable portion of the population were younger, the Township would benefit from ball fields and playground facilities.

Based on the U.S. Census for 2010 and 2020, Huron Township’s population is rapidly aging. The fastest growing age group over the last decade is 65 and over, at an increase of 62%, followed by the 18 to 34 age group, at 4.04%. This is encouraging as it is the next generation to begin having families and adding young children to the population of Huron Township. The 5 to 17 and 5 to 17 age groups saw a modest increase, while the under 5 age group and 35 to 64 declined slightly.

SEMCOG’s 2045 Population Projection by Age suggests that while the entire population and age groups will continue to grow, it is the 25 to 54 age group that will see the most notable increase of 23%. With the 65 to 84 population expected to increase more than 66% over the next 25 years, Huron Township should consider taking steps to care for this ever-growing segment. This growth is consistent with national trends towards aging.

**Table 4:**  
*Population Change by Age Group for 2010 and 2021*

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Census 2010</i>	<i>Census 2021</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
<b>Under 5</b>	945	848	-97	-10.26%
<b>5 to 17</b>	3,062	3,148	86	2.81%
<b>18 to 34</b>	3,018	3,140	122	4.04%
<b>35 to 64</b>	7,209	6,983	-226	-3.13%
<b>65+</b>	1,645	2,666	1021	62.07%
<b>Total</b>	13,737	16,785	3,048	22.19%

*Source: U.S. Census*

**Table 5:**  
*Projected 2045 Population by Age*

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Census 2021</i>	<i>SEMCOG 2045 Forecast</i>	<i>Projected Change</i>	<i>Projected % Change</i>
<b>Under 5</b>	848	1,226	378	44.58%
<b>5 to 17</b>	3,148	2,843	-305	-9.69%
<b>18 to 24</b>	1,163	1,444	281	24.16%
<b>25-54</b>	6390	8,000	1,610	25.20%
<b>55-64</b>	2,666	2,453	213	-7.99%
<b>65-84</b>	2,399	3,379	-980	40.85%
<b>85+</b>	267	556	289	108.24%
<b>Total</b>	16,881	19,901	3,020	17.89%

*Source: SEMCOG*

***Income***

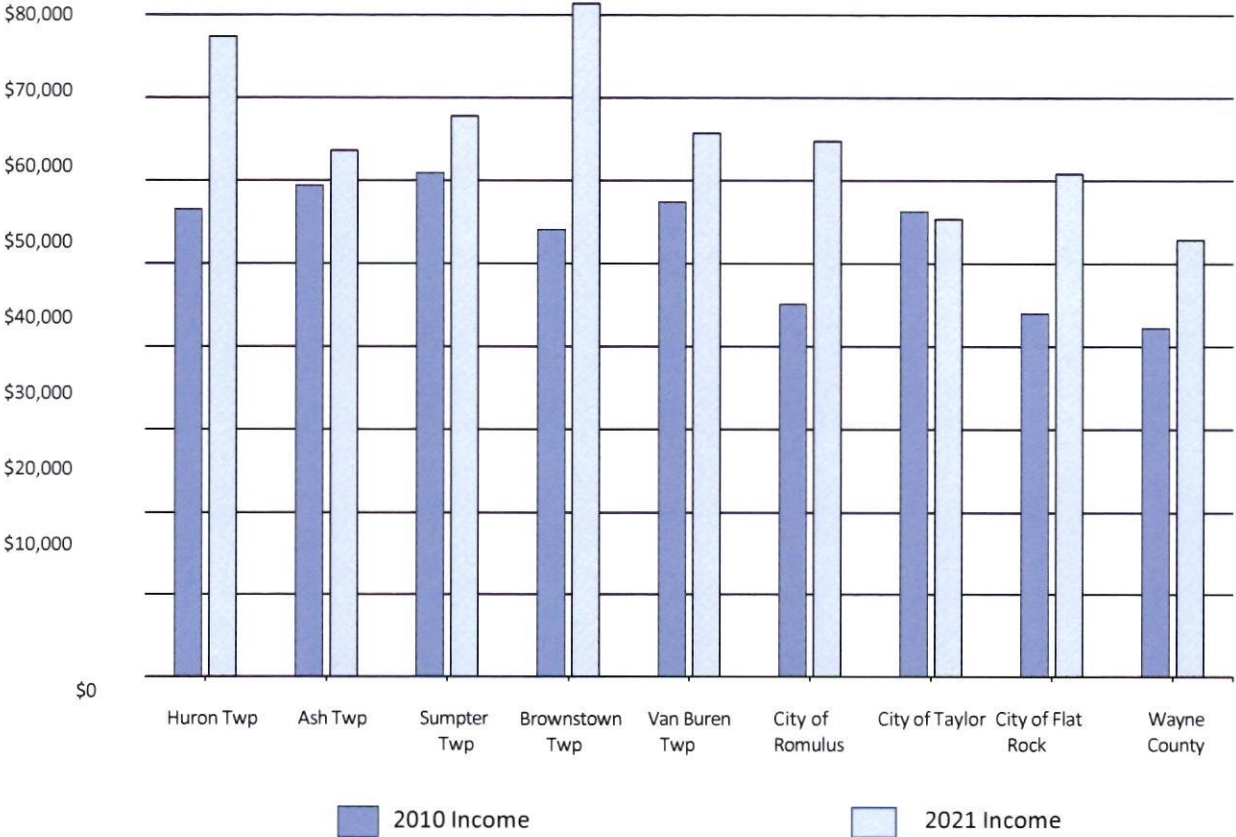
Median household income is traditionally used to measure the economic strength of an area. Comparatively, it is also a helpful indicator to identify disparities between municipal jurisdictions. Income can also have land use implications, since people with higher incomes usually invest more in their houses, and therefore typically expect more from local government.

Table 6 illustrates median household income for 2010 and 2021, as provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. Comparing Huron Township to neighboring communities, the Township’s income level is close to the median income of nine jurisdictions in the area of \$77,366. The income level of Huron Township is also significantly higher than the \$52,830 median income for Wayne County, as a whole.

**Table 6:**  
*Comparison of Incomes Against Neighboring Communities in 2010 and 2021*

<i>Community</i>	<i>2010 Income</i>	<i>2021 Income</i>
<b>Huron Twp</b>	\$56,535	\$77,366
<b>Ash Twp</b>	\$59,375	\$63,586
<b>Sumpter Twp</b>	\$60,941	\$67,772
<b>Brownstown Twp</b>	\$54,077	\$81,334
<b>Van Buren Twp</b>	\$57,402	\$65,701
<b>City of Romulus</b>	\$45,100	\$64,712
<b>City of Taylor</b>	\$56,278	\$55,358
<b>City of Flat Rock</b>	\$43,942	\$60,792
<b>Wayne County</b>	\$42,241	\$52,830

**Figure 4:**  
*Comparison of Incomes Against Neighboring Communities in 2010 and 2021*



## ***Income***

A greater percentage of the population in Huron Township has completed high school and an associate degree when compared to Wayne County and the State. Nonetheless, a greater percentage of Wayne County and the State's population have attained advanced degrees such as a bachelor's degree and graduate degree.

Since 2010, the percentage of the population in Huron Township that has not completed high school has declined considerably. Overall, the level of educational attainment in Huron Township has steadily increased since 2010.

**Table 7:**

*Comparison of Educational Attainment Against Wayne County and State of Michigan in 2021*

<b><i>Highest Level of Attainment</i></b>	<b><i>Huron Township</i></b>	<b><i>% Change since 2010</i></b>	<b><i>Wayne County</i></b>	<b><i>State of Michigan</i></b>
<b>Graduate / Professional Degree</b>	7.3%	52.0%	10.30%	12.00%
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	13.4%	47.25%	15.50%	18.60%
<b>Associate degree</b>	11.0%	100%	8.60%	9.70%
<b>Some College, No Degree</b>	23.3%	-19.1%	23.60%	22.80%
<b>High School Graduate</b>	36.7%	-5.3%	29.60%	28.50%
<b>Did Not Graduate High School</b>	5.90%	-54.9%	8.40%	5.60%

*Source: U.S. Census*

## ***Housing and Economic Development***

Although population and income are important factors to consider when contemplating the potential future impacts upon a community, it is the built environment or housing units that will accommodate this future population growth and have the most impact on future land use.

As in the case with most bedroom communities, the primary dwelling type in Huron Township is single-family homes, which represent 69.2% of the total housing stock. The proportion of single-family detached homes and townhouses in Huron Township are consistent with Wayne County as a whole. Wayne County has a greater proportion of multi-unit apartments while mobile homes comprise a far greater percentage of the local housing stock in Huron Township.

Housing units increased 2.6% between 2010 and 2021. Multi-Unit housing experienced the greatest increase at an increase of almost 300%. This indicates that although single-family detached homes remain the dominant housing structure in Huron Township, denser housing types that support more families are growing in popularity and affordability. The number of single-family detached homes increased slightly, and mobile homes/manufactured housing remained steady.

In comparison to surrounding communities, Huron Township had the fourth highest increase in housing units, behind Ash Township, Sumpter Township, and Flat Rock. In terms of total housing units, the city of Taylor and Van Buren Township have the highest stock of total number of housing units, while Huron Township has the third lowest number of total housing units.

**Table 8:**  
*Housing Structure by Type in Huron Township and Wayne County in 2021*

<i>Housing Type</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Single Family Detached	3,965	4,217	252	6.35%
Multi-Unit Apartment	92	365	273	296.7%
Mobile Home/ Manufactured Housing	1,484	1,513	29	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,940</b>	<b>6,095</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

Source: US Census

**Table 9:**  
*Occupied Housing in Huron Township and Surrounding Communities 2010-2021*

<i>Community</i>	<i>2010</i>		<i>2021</i>	
	<i>Persons Per Occupied Housing Unit</i>	<i>Occupied Housing Unit</i>	<i>Persons Per Occupied Housing Unit</i>	<i>Occupied Housing Unit</i>
Huron Twp	2.90	5,781	2.73	6,095
Ash Twp (Monroe Co.)	2.61	3,003	2.95	3,165
Sumpter Twp	2.73	3,513	2.58	3,415
Brownstown Twp	2.89	11,342	2.70	12,156
Van Buren Twp	2.56	11,821	2.35	12,855
City of Romulus	2.78	8,975	2.73	8,837
City of Taylor	2.59	24,370	2.57	24,643
City of Flat Rock	2.78	3,754	2.73	3,754
Wayne County	2.53	702,749	2.57	685,635

A sizable percentage (89.7%) of the dwelling units are owner-occupied homes. This number has held steady and consistent through the last decade.

**Table 10:**  
*Housing Tenure in Huron Township 2010 and 2021*

<i>Housing Tenure</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>% Change</i>	<i>% of Total (2021)</i>
Owner occupied	5,237	5,466	4.37%	89.7%
Renter occupied	544	629	15.62%	10.3%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>5,781</b>	<b>6,095</b>	<b>5.43%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

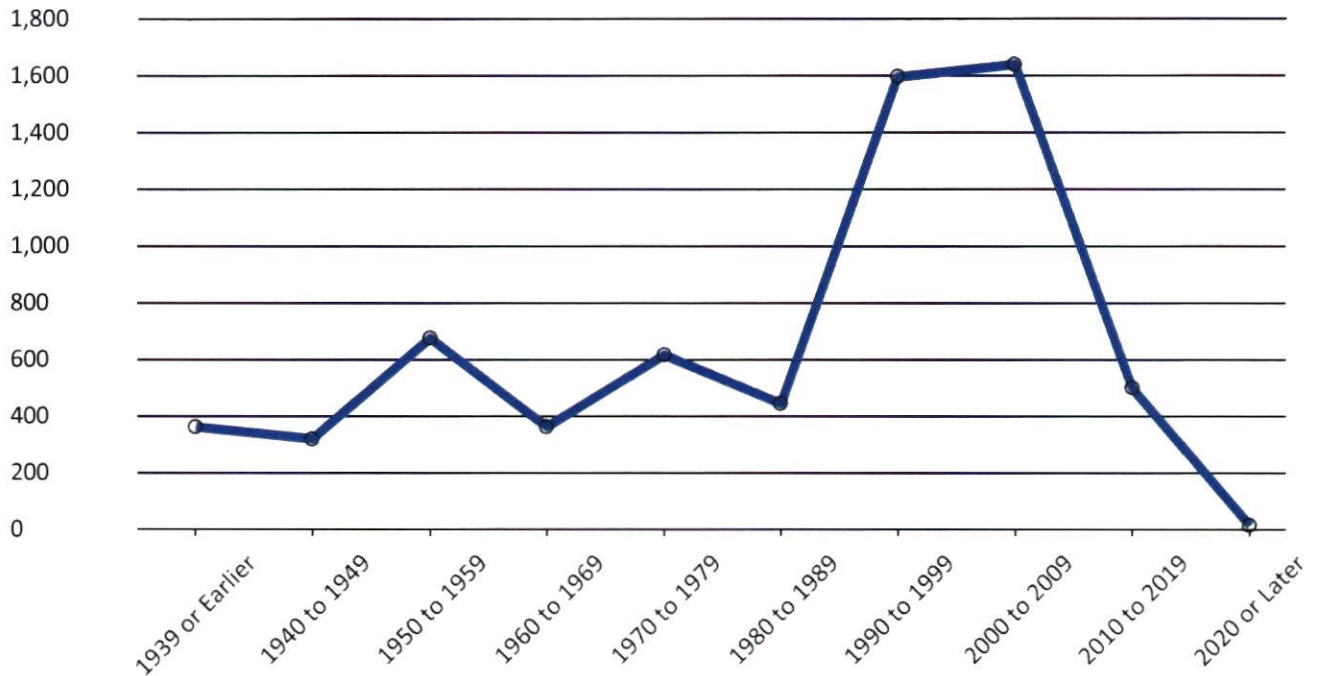
Source: US Census

Approximately, half of the homes in Huron Township were built prior to 2000. The other half of the housing stock resulted primarily from a housing boom that began shortly thereafter. While the pace of construction has slowed from 2010 onwards, when compared to the boom in the 1980s, housing in Huron Township still continues to grow at a steady pace.

**Table 11:**  
*Number of Homes Built in Huron Township by Decade*

<i>Year Structure Built</i>	<i># Built</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
1939 or Earlier	363	5.55%
1940 to 1949	320	4.90%
1950 to 1959	676	10.34%
1960 to 1969	363	5.55%
1970 to 1979	617	9.44%
1980 to 1989	445	6.81%
1990 to 1999	1,596	24.41%
2000 to 2009	1,640	25.09%
2010 to 2019	501	7.66%
2020 or Later	16	0.24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,537</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 5:**  
*Number of Homes Built in Huron Township by Decade*



Source: U.S. Census

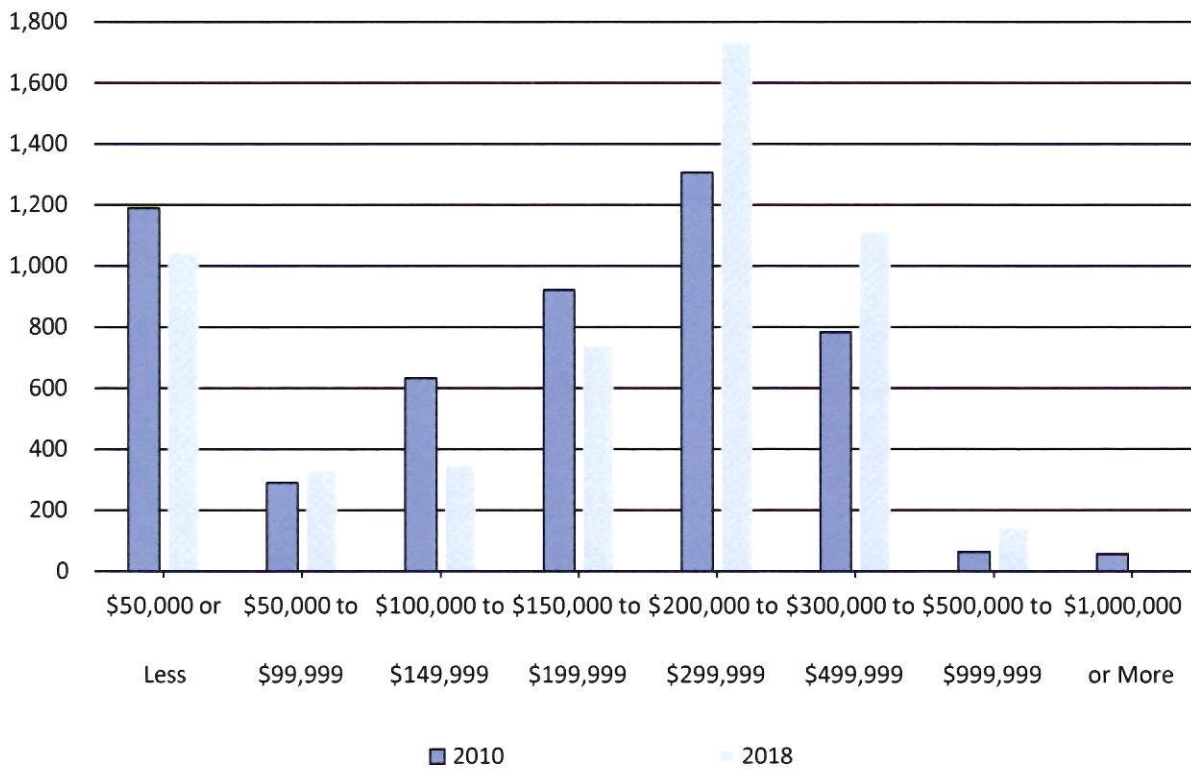
### ***Housing Values***

Approximately 76.9% of homes in Huron Township are valued at less than \$299,999. Housing values have notably increased in Huron Township over the last decade, with 31.7% of homes valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999, while 19.9% are valued between \$100,000 and \$199,999, and 25.2% are valued at \$99,999 or under. A larger percentage of homes than what was seen a decade ago, 20.4%, are valued at \$300,000 to \$499,999, and 2.7% are valued at \$500,000 and above. The median housing value in Huron Township in 2021 was \$221,900, up 23.3% from 2010.

**Table 12:**  
*Housing Values for Huron Township in 2021*

<i>Housing Value</i>	<i># of Homes</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
< \$29,999	1,046	19.1%
\$30,000-\$59,999	334	6.1%
\$60,000 - \$99,999	349	6.4%
\$100,000 - \$149,000	740	13.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	1,734	31.7%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	1,116	20.4%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	147	2.7%
\$500,000 +	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,466</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 6:**  
*Housing Values for Huron Township in 2021*



Source: U.S. Census

Table 13, below, provides a history of the State Equalized Value (SEV) of all properties in the Township. In the past nine years, the largest gain in SEV occurred between 2014 and 2015. The Township’s SEV had consistently increased until the economic downturn in 2008 and continued to decline until 2012. Trends have shown a consistent increase though in the years hereafter. SEV is an indication of the value of property in a community and is based on 50% of the “true” cash value of property. The local assessor determines the cash value of all properties in the Township. Property taxes are based in part on 50% of the total value.

**Table 13:**  
*Huron Township SEV Totals from 2012-2022*

<b>Year</b>	<b>SEV</b>	<b>% Change</b>
2012	\$446,683,100	-2.65%
2013	\$455,929,500	2.07%
2014	\$463,101,878	1.57%
2015	\$516,790,100	11.59%
2016	\$549,976,960	6.42%
2017	\$574,845,900	4.52%
2018	\$591,872,347	2.96%
2019	\$622,388,950	5.16%
2020	\$654,439,994	5.15%
2021	\$713,302,300	8.99%
2022	\$807,191,850	13.16%

*Source: Huron Charter Township*

### ***Employment and Unemployment***

A good measure of the economic health of a community is a review of the unemployment statistics and a comparison with neighboring municipalities. In the past, Huron Township generally exhibited lower unemployment numbers when compared with neighboring communities and Wayne County. Data from the U.S. Census showed that in 2021, Huron Township had an unemployment rate of 6.6%. While this number is below the average for Wayne County as a whole, it is higher than the number of surrounding communities.

Unemployment decreased significantly since 2010, from 13.1% to 5.0% aggregate, for the year of 2021. There was an increase in unemployment in 2020. However, this trend is not exclusively a local phenomenon, as most regions of the nation have been greatly impaired by the pandemic and subsequent job losses.

**Table 14:**  
*Employment Status of Residents in Huron Township, 2021*

<i>Employment Status</i>	<i>Huron Twp</i>	<i>% of Total in Huron Twp</i>	<i>Wayne County</i>	<i>% of Total in Wayne County</i>
<b>Employed</b>	7,410	93.4%	734,480	89.8%
<b>Unemployed</b>	525	6.6%	83,328	10.2%
<b>Total Labor Force</b>	7,935	100.0%	817,808	100.0%

*Source: U.S. Census*

**Table 15:**  
*Unemployment Rate in Huron Township and Neighboring Communities, 2021*

<i>City/Township</i>	<i>2021 % Unemployment</i>
<b>Huron Twp</b>	5.0%
<b>Ash Twp</b>	5.1%
<b>Brownstown Twp</b>	5.7%
<b>Van Buren Twp</b>	8.5%
<b>Sumpter Twp</b>	4.8%
<b>Romulus</b>	9.4%
<b>Flat Rock</b>	6.1%
<b>Taylor</b>	7.0%
<b>Wayne County</b>	9.2%

*Source: U.S. Census*

Relative to the county, a higher percentage of the employment in Huron Township is found in manufacturing, transportation/warehousing/utilities, and retail trade. On a national level, manufacturing has been declining, accounting for less and less of the national GDP. Transportation/warehousing/utilities and wholesale trade industries are also related industries that support and benefit from manufacturing. As a result, Huron Township’s relatively large manufacturing base may be one reason for slightly higher unemployment rates in the Township when compared to neighboring communities. Nevertheless, industry growth in the manufacturing sector, such as the Amazon Fulfillment Center, may indicate that these numbers are on the rise in Huron Township.

**Table 16:**  
*Employment by Industry in Huron Township and Wayne County, 2021*

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Huron Twp</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>Wayne County</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	93	1.26%	2,316	0.32%
Construction	206	2.78%	30,291	4.12%
Manufacturing	1,755	23.68%	130,381	17.75%
Wholesale trade	88	1.19%	17,593	2.40%
Retail trade	835	11.27%	77,964	10.61%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	880	11.88%	44,301	6.03%
Information	64	0.86%	11,257	1.53%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	289	3.90%	41,328	5.63%
Professional, scientific, and management, administrative and waste management services	325	4.39%	76,338	10.39%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1,577	21.28%	166,094	22.61%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	435	5.87%	77,406	10.54%
Other services, except public administration	417	5.63%	35,211	4.79%
Public administration	446	6.02%	24,000	3.27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,410</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>734,480</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

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# Chapter 3

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## Natural Features



It is important to begin an assessment of the community with a description of its natural attributes. This chapter presents a description of the topography, soils, water resources, and woodlands that form the natural context for the community.

### ***Woodlands & Soils***

The woodlands in Huron Township provide opportunities for recreation, habitats that support wildlife variety, and a clean-air environment that many residents and visitors enjoy. Soil topography is a characteristic of soil that generally illustrates the slope or “lay of the land” and has influences on cropland and septic suitability.

### ***Woodlands***

The majority of trees and vegetation that existed in Huron Township prior to agricultural development were cleared. Woodlands in Huron are now mainly second-generation growth or younger. Throughout the Township there are parcels of land with smaller isolated pockets of trees, with only a few large stands of mature trees. The largest concentration of significant woodlands is located within the Huron Clinton Metroparks. In addition, the trees along certain major roads, most notably Huron River Drive, add to the rural character of Huron Township by providing corridors and view sheds that are both attractive and unique.

The conservation of woodlands is a fundamental component of preserving the rural character of the Township. While the woodlands within the Huron Clinton Metroparks are substantial, the preservation of woodlands throughout the entire community will help to extend rural attributes throughout the Township. The Township has implemented a Tree Protection Ordinance. Its purpose is:

*“To provide for the protection, preservation, replacement, proper maintenance and use of trees and woodlands located on a parcel of land ten (10) acres in size or greater in the Township in order to minimize disturbance to them and to prevent damage from erosion and siltation, a loss of wildlife and vegetation, and/or the destruction of the natural habitat”.*

This Ordinance helps to support the Township’s preservation objectives for aesthetic and recreational benefits, and for economic gain for the whole community.

### ***Soils***

As the glaciers melted and receded to the north, they deposited debris (i.e., soils sediment and rocks) in the form of glacial till and moraines. Till was typically deposited in a uniform manner as the glacier receded, while moraines were created when the glacier essentially “dumped” its debris in one particular location. The slopes and drainage of the area have, therefore, been determined by where and how much glacial debris was deposited in particular areas.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has written the Soil Survey of Wayne County, Michigan, which includes maps of the numerous soil associations in the area. The survey is a general overview of the soil types and is intended for planning purposes. Generally, the soils in Huron Township are poorly drained causing water problems during times of heavy rain. Also, these types of soils indicate severe limitations for septic systems.



### ***Water Features***

Watersheds are a reminder that natural processes do not follow political boundaries, and planning for healthy environments can transcend the abilities of individual municipalities. Water quality within a watershed is related to the land management practices within that watershed. For example, if a new development creates a large amount of impervious surface (i.e., asphalt) and storm water is not properly managed, it is possible that the rate and volume of flow into the creek, stream, or river will increase to a point that stream bank erosion occurs. Stream bank erosion will increase silt material on the streambed, change the chemistry of the water with phosphates, nitrogen, and other chemicals, and alter the turbidity of the water. All of these changes may have an effect on the wildlife that is dependent on the stream or river for survival.

### ***The Huron River***

A watershed is a region of land that is drained by a particular river or river system. Watershed systems include many smaller tributaries such as creeks and streams that feed into a larger river and are influenced by elevation or the lay of the land. Huron Township is blessed with the presence of the Huron River and the Metroparks. The natural features associated with the Huron River are a critical part of the Township’s ecosystem, natural heritage, and quality of life.

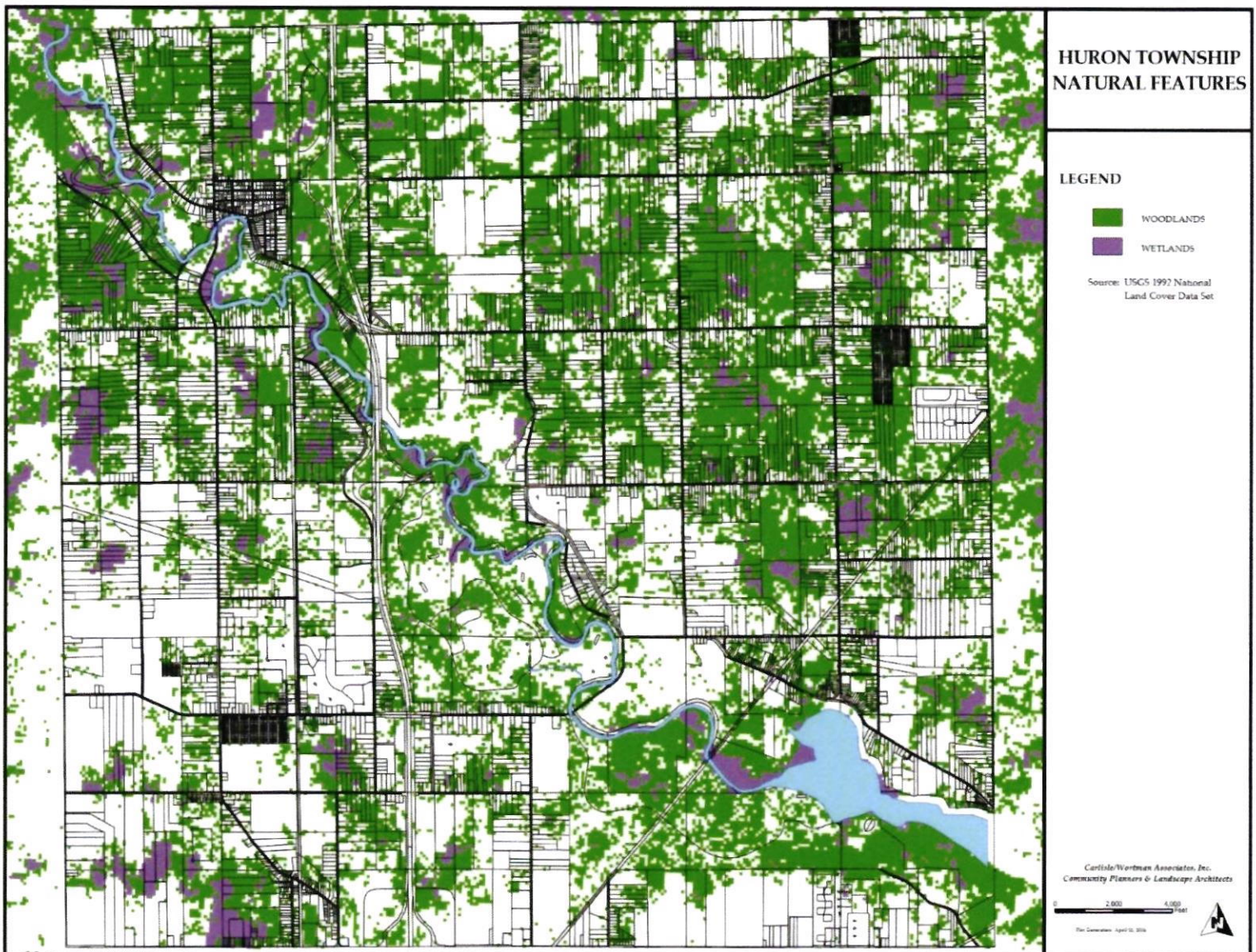
### ***Wetlands***

Wetlands are complex ecological systems that provide a number of important benefits. Wetlands reduce flood hazards by providing additional storm water storage. Wetlands that overlay groundwater recharge areas improve groundwater quality by filtering the water as it percolates through the soil. Wetlands located along a watercourse protect surface water quality by filtering surface run-off. Finally, wetlands are highly productive ecosystems, which provide an essential habitat for Michigan’s fish and wildlife.

According to the National Wetland Inventory, Huron Township had approximately 703 acres of wetlands in 1980. These wetlands include emergent, forested and scrub-shrub types of wetlands. In addition to being a natural habitat for fish and wildlife, wetlands control flood and storm water, remove pollutants from water, control erosion and can function as ground water recharge areas. Any remaining wetlands that could be preserved would add to the rural and natural character of Huron Township.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) regulates certain wetlands. According to the MDEQ, a permit to drain, fill, or modify a wetland must be obtained if the wetland(s) is five acres or larger or if the wetland is located within five hundred feet of surface water (i.e., lake or stream). Wetlands that are smaller than five acres may be regulated by a local community ordinance. Huron Township may consider local wetlands regulation in the future to retain these valuable smaller wetland areas.

## MAP 2 NATURAL FEATURES



# Chapter 4

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## Community Facilities and Services



Community facilities events and significant role in preserving quality of life, augmenting civic engagement, sponsoring cultural events, and promoting town pride. Huron Township is home to three Huron-Clinton Metroparks that draw people from all over southeast Michigan for recreation and enjoyment.

In addition to these important natural areas, schools and public services help establish safe local spaces for interaction, learning, and community building. Elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and even police and fire facilities, often serve as the heart of a small town - especially for children and youth.

### ***Schools***

The Huron Public School District services Huron Township and sections of Sumpter and Ash Townships. Two elementary schools, a junior high, a high school, and an early childhood center are all located within Huron Township. Brown Elementary School and Miller Elementary School both provide a playground for younger children and an open play area for organized activities for older elementary school children.

Renton Junior High and Huron High School are both located at the northwest corner of Huron River Drive and Merriman Road. In addition to classroom facilities, the site offers an outdoor track, football field, tennis courts and several ball fields for both baseball and softball. The buildings were constructed between 1940 and 1969.

Several private schools also serve the community. St. Stephen's in New Boston and St. John's in Waltz each incorporate private elementary schools and recreational facilities. Summit Academy located near the intersection of Sibley and Middlebelt Roads has two separate buildings and provides private schooling for kindergarten through twelfth grade.

### ***Parks***

The Township maintains three public parks. Lajko Park is situated on Huron River Drive, north of West Road. Approximately four acres of the 8-acre park are dedicated to two baseball fields, a basketball court, a picnic shelter, and a children's playground. Because of its larger size, Lajko Park functions as more of a regional park. Berlin Park, located on Sterling Street, also includes a children's playground and functions as a small neighborhood park. The third park is Waltz Park, which currently only has one ball diamond.



The Huron Clinton Metroparks serve as the primary recreation destinations in Huron Township. The Lower Huron, Willow, and Oakwoods Metroparks comprise over 3,200 acres in the Township and function as a nature preserve surrounding the Huron River. Willow Metropark hosts a public 18-hole golf course. The three park facilities also offer boat rentals, canoeing, modern picnic shelters, swimming pools, playgrounds, fishing, and hiking and biking trails. Open space and woodlands embrace the Huron River throughout the parklands and attract people from all over the region.

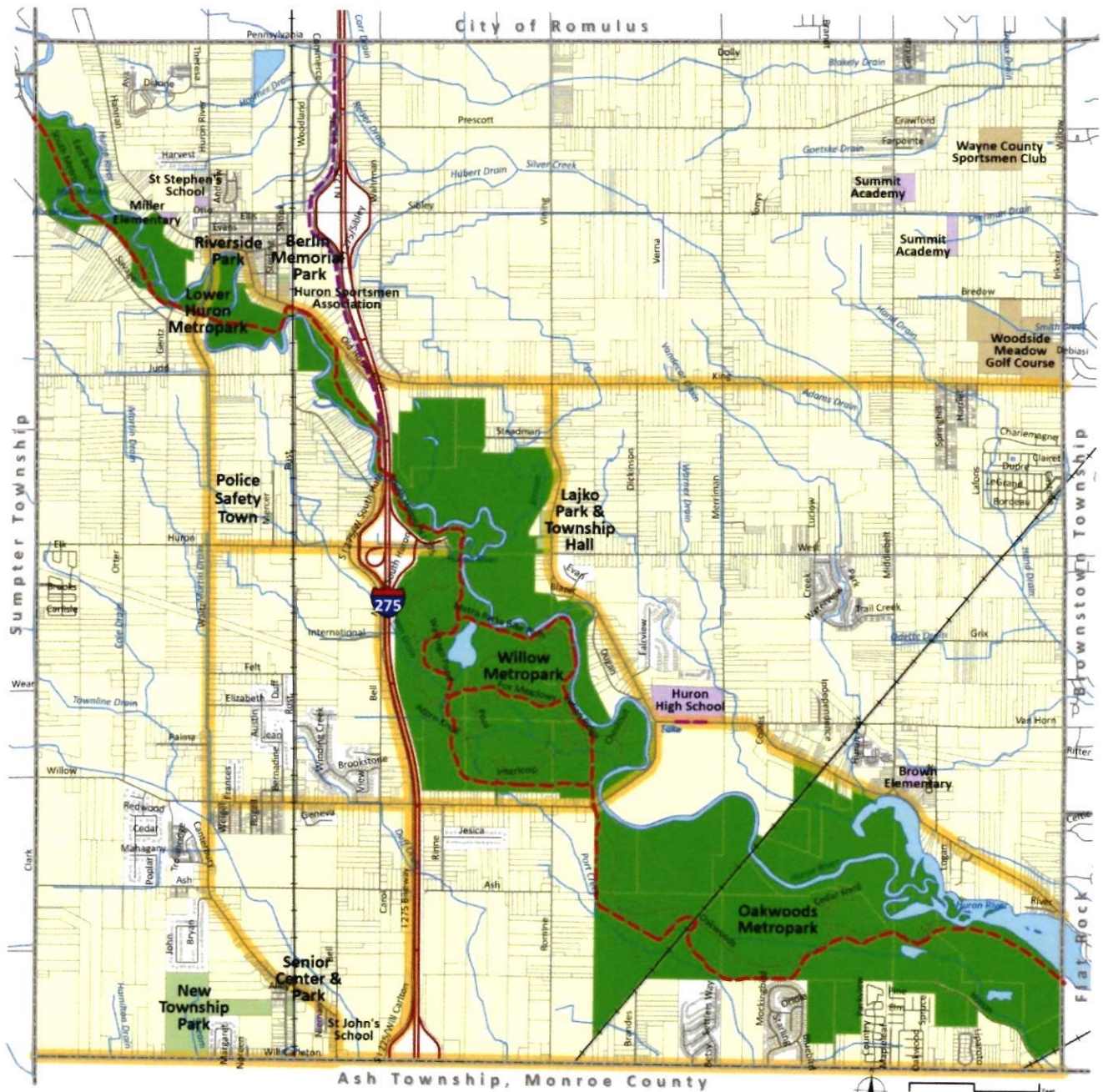
### ***Facilities and Public Services***

The Huron Township Hall is located at 22950 Huron River Drive in New Boston. The Department of Public Works has a facility located at the intersection of Sterling and Kass Streets. The Krzyske Community Center is located on Mineral Springs Avenue, south of Waltz Road. The Senior Center also exists at this location.

The Fire Department has three stations that provide fire protection for the entire Township: Sterling and Kass Streets in New Boston, Sibley Road and Middlebelt Road, and on Mineral Springs Avenue, south of Waltz Road in the Village of Waltz.

The police station is located at the corner of Mercer Drive and South Huron Road.

# MAP 3 PARKS, PATHWAYS & COMMUNITY FACILITIES



- Township Facilities
- Schools
- Private Facilities
- HCMA Metroparks
- HCMA Shared-Use Path
- I-275 Shared-Use Path
- Future Local Pathway Routes

## Huron Charter Township Wayne County

9-19-13  
Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.  
Ann Arbor, Michigan



# Chapter 5

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## Transportation and Public Utilities



Source: <https://bridgehunter.com/mi/wayne/waltz-road/>

## ***Roadways***

Located in the western third of the Township is Interstate 275, a major freeway in Southeastern Michigan that connects northern Monroe County to southern Oakland County. I-275 provides the community with convenient regional access to I-75, I-94, I-96, I-696 and M-14, all major components of the interstate freeway system in Metropolitan Detroit.

Running the entire length of the Township, the Huron River corridor forms a natural barrier between the east side of the Township and the west. Other than I-275, there are currently only two ways to cross the river, one in New Boston, and the other at Willow Road.

Access between the east and west sections of the Township is critical for a number of reasons. Most importantly, access for emergency vehicles is essential to provide adequate protection of public health and safety. The connection is also critical to the unity of the community. Three villages, New Boston, Waltz, and Willow are located in the west sections of the Township while most residential development has been materializing in the south half of the Township.

Despite the interruptions in the road system attributed to the Huron River and associated Metroparks, I-275, and the railroad, the overall road network in Huron Township is well established along the section lines of the Township.

Increases in traffic on Huron's roads are heavily influenced by growth both within and outside the Township. For example, residents in adjacent communities who utilize I-275 drive through Huron Township to access the expressway. This has several implications, as this makes strip commercial development appear more attractive to developers and store owners, and traffic between I-275 and I-75 could generally pose a hazard for residents with increased growth and development.

Many people enjoy the freedom and convenience associated with the private automobile, and the low-density development patterns of most suburban and rural communities, which precludes the feasibility of public transportation, and requires ownership of a car.

As such, traffic congestion on Sibley Road is increasingly an issue. Sibley Road provides popular access to Interstate 275 (the only other access points are at Will Carleton Road and South Huron Road) and links the east and west portions of the community. As the proposed Pinnacle development fully materializes, Sibley Road will face additional traffic, and will likely become the Township's hot spot for commercial, office, and industrial activity. Measures to ensure the desired outcome for this corridor should begin now so roadway capacity and safety on Sibley Road is not compromised by growth.

An observable challenge to the Township's roads is the conflicts associated with increasing traffic and gravel road quality. As more automobile traffic increases, gravel and dirt roads are likely to deteriorate at an increasing rate. Consequently, the Township and/or Wayne County may decide to improve such gravel roadways. While these roadway enhancements will improve traffic flow,

greater accessibility typically encourages more development. Then as development pressures amplify, further road improvements will be expected. The process is relentless since any improved, high-visibility traffic corridor will be sought out for concentrated commercial, office, and industrial development. Even though the Township is expected to receive its share of growth, the residents desire to manage it to evade the sprawling and high traffic generating development that is typical of its northern and eastern neighbors.

It is necessary to note that improving or widening a road based exclusively on traffic engineering standards will not always generate the optimal result. Transportation planners are often frustrated that "improved" corridors rarely alleviate the congestion problem. Higher capacity due to wider roads usually "drives" more intense land use until the congestion returns to previous levels. Paving and widening gravel roads also destroys the mature trees that hug the right-of-way and serve to keep speeds down while preserving the pastoral qualities of the Township.

### ***Traffic Volumes***

There are a variety of factors that determine the volume of traffic along a given roadway. The location and length of the roadway, the roadway condition, and the quantity and type of adjacent land uses are all factors that contribute to the overall traffic on the roadway.

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) 2021 Average Daily Traffic map for Wayne County indicates that the highest volumes of traffic are on I-275: with an average of 30,900 trips across Huron Township daily. From data collected, Sibley Rd, just off the I-275, is the busiest road in Huron Township, averaging about 14,000 trips daily between Wahrman Rd and Inkster Rd. Will Carlton Rd between Waltz and Grafton also average about 13,000 trips per day. Inkster Rd between King Rd and Sibley Rd average about 11,900 trips per day,

### ***High Crash Locations***

SEMCOG data indicates traffic crashes are most common at Inkster and King Roads, with an average of 8.6 crashes annually between 2017-2021. During the same period, Will Carlton Road averaged thirty-one crashes per year, and Sibley Road averaged 18 crashes per year. Not surprisingly, these roads also have the highest traffic volume within the Township.

### ***Air Transportation***

There are no public airports located within the Township. Nonetheless, the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport is located less than 1 mile to the north in the City of Romulus. The airport comprises about 6,700 acres, has six runways, and 145 airplane gates. In 2019, the airport serviced 36,000,000 passengers and the Airports Council International (ACI) selected Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW) as one of the best airports by size and category (25-40 million passengers) in North America for customer service. The Federal Aviation Administration anticipates passenger traffic to increase 60% by 2027. With an estimated \$7.6 billion annual economic impact, and a 71,000-job impact, it is likely that the airport's growth and expansion will

have an effect on nearby Huron Township. (DTW website)

### ***Utilities***

Due to the Township's rural nature, the storm water system consists largely of open ditches and county drains. Even along two of the Township's most heavily traveled roads - Sibley and Middlebelt - there are no curbs and gutters, though there are some curbs and gutters in downtown New Boston along Huron River Drive. As subdivisions are built, developers are typically required to install curbs and gutters along the roadways.

Historic improvements to the system involved petitions from residents that brought new ditch crossings and inspections for other issues. Wayne County has generally planned to install an urban storm sewer along Huron Township's main roads, but the general timetable suggests this is 10 to 15 years away. The Township has entered into its third year of an agreement with the county to consolidate the open drains. As part of this 7-year rolling plan, the county is re-ditching along main roads, in addition to making other improvements.

Water is provided to Huron Township from the City of Detroit Water System, though Huron Township operates the distribution system with over ninety miles of water mains. Some Pennsylvania Road residents are serviced by the City of Romulus system. Huron Township residents in some areas along the Inkster Road corridor connect to the system owned and maintained by Brownstown Township. See Map 4 Utilities.

The South Huron Valley Utility Authority (SHVUA) is comprised of 7 area communities, including Huron Township. The SHVUA treatment facility, in Brownstown Township, began expansion in 1997. The facility has expanded from twelve million gallons per day (MOD) to 24 MOD.

Some pockets of the Township are not serviced with sanitary sewer service. The Villages of Willow, Waltz and New Boston and the manufactured home parks are connected to the sanitary sewer system. Otherwise, sanitary sewer service in the Township follows major roadways, including West Road, Dickinson Road, South Huron Road, Huron River Drive and Van Horn Road. Most other residents must use on-site septic systems to treat wastewater.

As utilities are expanded and improved into formerly unserved areas, development becomes more attractive, as does higher densities. Since utilities support greater densities, the Township must balance this demand with the goal to preserve the rural character in the unserved areas.

### ***Railroads***

Two railways traverse through the Township. These lines are major freight carriers that connect metropolitan Detroit with the Midwest and the nation and are pivotal given the magnitude of industry to the north near the airport and manufacturing to the northeast.

The CSX Railroad runs north and south and is west of 1-275. The Pennsylvania Railroad runs northeast and southwest in the southeastern quadrant of the Township.

The existence of rail lines in moderately populated areas, such as Huron Township, can present an increasing accessibility obstacle where rail lines intersect roadways at grade. Emergency vehicles and other traffic become trapped while waiting for a train to pass through, causing congestion and an extended wait time for first responders.

It should be noted that the City of Romulus has pushed for grade separations but has realized that grade separations at all road-rail intersections is impractical. The City and Wayne County have identified the rail crossing at Pennsylvania Road, at the Huron-Romulus boundary, as a priority for improvement to ease traffic congestion. This is a logical first step to this problem since Pennsylvania Road is slightly elevated.

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# Chapter 6

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## Existing Land Use



## ***Land Use***

Huron Township is thirty-six square miles in area and is located on the southwestern periphery of suburban Detroit. The Township has primarily remained a rural bedroom community with fields, woodlands, and single-family homes scattered throughout the landscape. There are some relatively concentrated residential uses in the three village areas - New Boston, Waltz, and Willow.

Most residential development that has occurred in the Township has resulted in lot size diversity where 40-acre estates are adjacent to 1-acre suburban lots and 10-acre rural lots. Combined with these relatively large parcels are small residential lots on less than half an acre. This sprinkled pattern of residential density within Huron Township has occurred over time with varying development philosophies. Map 3 illustrates existing land use throughout Huron Township.

The typical practice for Townships was to construct roads along section lines for farmers to gain access to their land. The roads were gravel and at most two lanes wide. The design of these roads was adequate for the amount of traffic within the Township and met the needs of the residents. With time, landowners subdivided properties and sold parcels to land developers.

There are several implications associated with this pattern of neighboring homes fronting on major roads, as opposed to traditional subdivision development with homes backing up to major roads. As the Township continues to grow, traffic will increase. The issue of access management will become more apparent as residents try to back out of their driveways, and find they have to wait for passing traffic to clear. Turning conflicts also increase as residents braking to turn into a driveway decelerate through traffic. While this is not a burning issue at present, as development increases, more people will be traveling on the roads in the Township. It may be desirable to encourage low-density open space subdivisions, rather than lot splits, to champion fewer access points and curb cuts along major roads. Low-density subdivisions can contribute to a rural ambiance, if scenic and natural easements are maintained along the road frontage. However, assembling the sites for low-density subdivisions from the rear portions of numerous long deep lots may be a challenge.

Compared with the nearby cities of Romulus and Westland, Huron Township lacks multiple-family residential development. As the community continues to grow, the rise of single-family housing costs will make it harder for young adults, new families, and senior citizens to remain in the Township due to a shortage of affordable housing.

A majority of the institutional land uses have been placed in the Village population centers. This practice has contributed to the establishment of these Villages as central locations, which promotes a sense of community and identity. New Boston, Willow, and Waltz have been successful in maintaining much of the small-town character that has made them a dynamic and embraced component of the Township. Preservation of the unique character of these Villages is essential in safeguarding history and encouraging small-scale "main street" commercial areas, rather than mile-long strip corridors. Encouraging these Villages to be vital commercial and cultural centers for the Township will help to sustain the pastoral characteristics of the remainder of the community.

## **Land Use Classifications**

### **Agricultural**

This category is meant to preserve the rural character and support stable and viable agricultural operations. The regulations in this district are designed to conserve and protect farm operations and discourage uses and buildings that demand substantial public or private services.

### **Single-Family Residential**

This category includes detached single-family dwelling units and accessory structures. Huron Charter Township has several districts that permit single-family residential units, including RR (Rural Residential), R-1 (Suburban Residential), R-2 (Low Density Residential), and R-3 (Medium Density Residential).

### **Multiple-Family Residential**

This category provides areas for single-family attached, or multiple family structures where two or more separate dwelling units occupy one of more buildings on a lot. This includes apartments, condominiums, or multi-plex units and results in greater housing density.

### **Manufactured/Mobile Homes**

This category allows the development of functional, compatible, and aesthetically pleasing manufactured home parks and their related accessory buildings and recreational areas. There are three mobile home parks spread out across Huron Township.

### **Commercial**

This category contains office, central business, local business, and general business uses that provide the community with professional services and shopping. The office district accommodates low-intensity, office-type profession and administrative services that support the community's activities. The central business district provides offices and a variety of retail stores for the wider population while the local business district includes commercial uses that typically serve the immediate neighborhood in which they are located. Lastly, the general business district serves the overall shopping needs and services of the wider population within and beyond the Township boundaries.

### **Industrial**

This category includes both light, medium, and heavy industrial uses. Light industrial uses include manufacturing, office/research, warehousing and distribution, and other similar light and minimal impact industrial uses. Medium and heavy industrial uses include manufacturing, assembly, and fabrication

### **Institutional**

This category includes public and quasi-public entities such as government buildings and public schools; uses owned by private, non-profit, or religious entities that provide public services.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Recreational uses include public and private outdoor recreation areas such as playgrounds, picnic areas, sports fields, and the like. Huron Township also is home to three Huron Clinton Metroparks that serve as recreation areas for the region: Lower Huron Metropark, Willow Metropark, and Oakwoods Metropark.

### **Transportation, Communication and Utilities**

This category includes all lines and facilities related to the provision, distribution, collection, transmission or disposal of water, storm and sanitary sewage, oil, gas, electricity, or telecommunication. It also includes road and railroad rights-of-way.

### **Vacant**

Included in this category are woodlands, permanent open space, and vacant land.

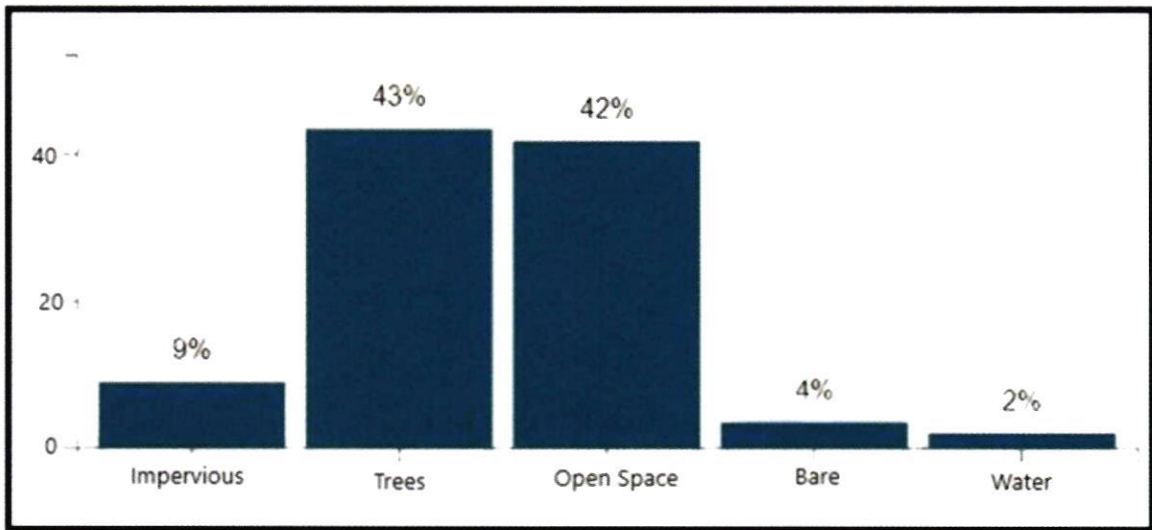
## HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP EXISTING LAND USE – CHANGE 2015-2020

Parcel Land Use	Acres 2015	Acres 2020	Change 2015 - 2020	Pct Change 2015 - 2020
Single-Family Residential	2,862	2,925	63	2.2%
Attached Condo Housing	38.6	49.7	11.1	28.8%
Multi-Family Housing	2.3	1.9	-0.4	-18.7%
Mobile Home	330.8	330.8	0	0%
Agricultural / Rural Residential	10,564.6	10,488.8	-75.8	-0.7%
Mixed Use	43	40.4	-2.6	-6%
Retail	101.7	163.4	61.7	60.6%
Office	70.3	64.9	-5.4	-7.7%
Hospitality	5.9	3.8	-2.1	-36%
Medical	1.8	1.8	0	0%
Institutional	255.8	225.2	-30.6	-12%
Industrial	252.6	252	-0.6	-0.2%
Recreational / Open Space	3,888.8	3,874.4	-14.4	-0.4%
Cemetery	252	252	0	0%
Golf Course	117.3	117.3	0	0%
Parking	1.5	1.5	0	0%
Extractive	19.7	19.7	0	0%
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	458.4	458.4	0	0%
Vacant	1,792.6	1,788.8	-3.7	-0.2%
Water	329.1	329.1	0	0%
Not Parceled	1,553.6	1,553.6	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,942.5</b>	<b>22,942.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

1. Agricultural / Rural Res includes any residential parcel containing one (1) or more homes where the parcel is three (3) acres or larger.
2. Mixed Use includes those parcels containing buildings with Hospitality, Retail, or Office square footage and housing units.
3. Not Parceled includes all areas within a community that are not covered by a parcel legal description.
4. Parcels that do not have a structure assigned to the parcel are considered vacant unless otherwise indicated, even if the parcel is part of a larger development such as a factory, school, or other developed series of lots.

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)

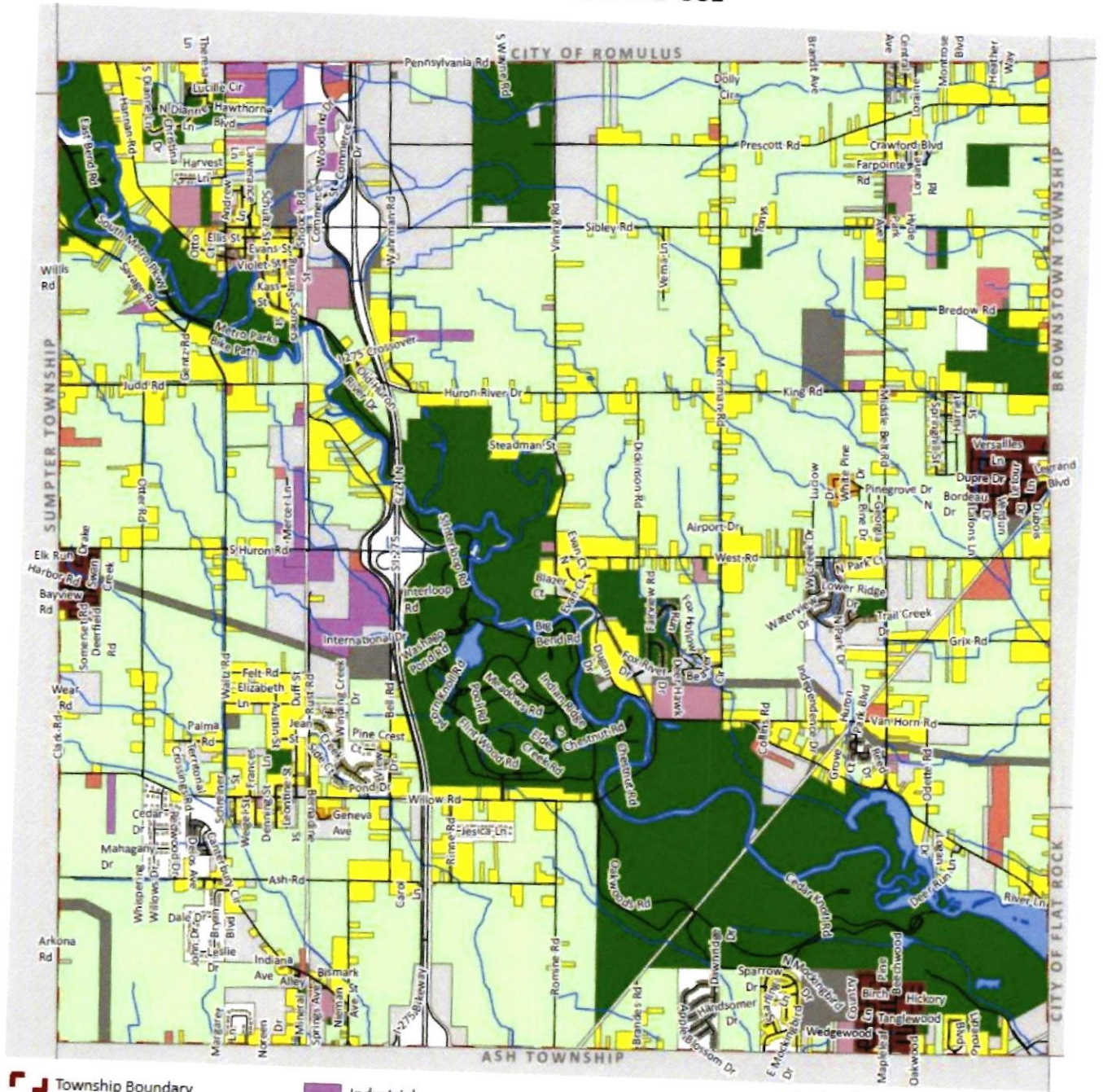
## HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP 2020 LAND COVER



Type	Description	Acres	Percent
<b>Impervious</b>	buildings, roads, driveways, parking lots	2,055.3	9%
<b>Trees</b>	woody vegetation, trees	9,975.2	43.5%
<b>Open Space</b>	agricultural fields, grasslands, turfgrass	9,607.1	41.9%
<b>Bare</b>	soil, aggregate piles, unplanted fields	821.5	3.6%
<b>Water</b>	rivers, lakes, drains, ponds	478.4	2.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>22,937.4</b>	

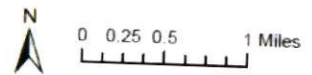
Source: SEMCOG

# MAP 4 HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP 2023 EXISTING LAND USE



- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Township Boundary           | Industrial                                   |
| Roads                       | Institutional                                |
| Rivers and Streams          | Parks and Recreation                         |
| Agricultural                | Transportation, Communication, and Utilities |
| Single Family Residential   | Vacant                                       |
| Multiple Family Residential | Water  |
| Manufactured/Mobile Home    | Outlying Townships                           |
| Commercial                  |  |

## Existing Land Use Huron Township Wayne County, Michigan



©2024 Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)

MAP 4 depicts generalized land use as it existed in 2023. There is no implied guarantee that the land use categories as shown on the 2020 Existing Land Use map will match exactly with what is on the ground.

# Chapter 7

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# Goals and Objectives



As part of the effort to develop this plan, Huron Township undertook a community-wide effort to establish a broadly held consensus about the preferred future of the community. The result of this effort is a series of goal statements, each supported with more specific objectives. This Master Plan is founded on these statements, which are intentionally general but achievable through concerted effort, and generally describe the community in twenty to twenty-five years.

Objectives are more specific and are intended to present a means to attain the goals. Objectives are more measurable standards, or a general way in which the goals can be accomplished. In many instances, they are specific statements, which can be readily translated into detailed design proposals or action recommendations.

The following statements are based on the desires and input of Township residents, the land use issues facing the community, analysis of existing conditions and physical features and resources. They provide a foundation for future land use implementation strategies.

## GENERAL

**GOAL:** Huron Township will achieve a balance between the development of public and private services, the preservation of natural features, and the creation of diversified housing stock, in order to position the Township as a premiere community within the Metro Detroit area.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Develop Township ordinances and policies that will preserve the natural features of Huron Township, especially the Huron River.
2. Develop Township ordinances and policies that will establish design principles and requirements that create a higher quality of residential and non-residential development that minimizes negative impacts to existing residences and natural features.
3. Develop Township ordinances and policies that encourage the creation of a variety of housing stock, especially senior housing.

## NATURAL FEATURES PRESERVATION

**GOAL:** The Township's valuable natural resources will continue to contribute to the community's character and rural charm. Huron Township will have preserved scenic natural areas and protected environmental quality by guiding new development in an environmentally sound manner and minimizing disturbance of sensitive and unique features. The community's commitment to its natural features will be reflected in effective measures to preserve, improve, and enhance its river, streams, groundwater, woodlands, and wildlife habitat.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Through zoning and site plan review, encourage approaches to land development that take natural features such as soils, topography, steep slopes, hydrology, and natural vegetation into account in the process of site design.
2. Encourage soil conservation practices and the prudent use of fertilizers and pesticides.
3. Through site plan review, encourage practices that promote natural valuable function of wetlands, especially those not protected under the State of Michigan Wetlands Protection Act (P.A 203 of 1979).
4. Preserve and protect, through zoning, those soils identified as prime agricultural soils; and utilize for development those soils not identified as having agricultural value.
5. Establish landscaping guidelines for existing and future commercial, industrial, and residential development that, through site plan review, would preserve and increase the numbers of trees and other woody vegetation in the Township.
6. In conjunction with the Wayne County Department of Public Services, identify and seek to remediate drainage practices that threaten the water quality of natural watercourses and are not consistent with sound runoff and erosion control techniques. Also, have more input in the process of developing a maintenance program for all certified County drains.
7. Encourage new developments to employ alternative site layout including open space design or scenic easements.

### **HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITY**

**GOAL:** The neighborhoods in Huron Township will help shape the Township's identity through strong community values and a deep sense of pride in the area. Residential land uses will be centralized around the established communities of New Boston, Waltz, and Willow to enable efficient use of infrastructure, convenient access to services to facilitate opportunities for social interaction.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Encourage the highest concentrations of residential development to occur in locations where there are existing public utilities and where future public utilities and services can be most economically and efficiently provided when they are needed.
2. Establish density standards that are consistent with the natural capacity of soils to handle on-site septic systems, and which promote the preservation of the Township's rural qualities.
3. Develop tools to foster a range of housing types including "starter homes" for young

- families, efficient and attractive housing for seniors and solid neighborhoods for the area's professionals.
4. Encourage creative design of neighborhoods to enhance desirability including amenities such as sidewalks, bike paths, pedestrian paths, open space, and pedestrian linkage to commercial centers.
  5. Encourage a single-family rural community character with a supporting mix of other housing choices to achieve the following mix of homes: single-family 65%, manufactured homes 15%, and multiple family, 20%.

## **ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**GOAL:** The economic vitality of Huron Township will be assured through a rational and sequential pattern of land uses that promote a range of quality job opportunities, clean and desirable industry, and land development that aesthetically improves the built environment. The Township will encourage a healthy blend of commercial services, entertainment opportunities and mixed-uses in the central areas of New Boston, Waltz, and Willow.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Expanding public utilities and services in those areas identified as desirable for development, retention, and expansion. Discourage, through zoning controls, intense development in areas that would lead to the need for public utilities and services that cannot be economically and efficiently provided in the near future.
2. Discourage, through zoning, the development of widespread strip development, facilitate access management and promote high-quality commercial development through local site plan reviews.
3. Support the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to serve both New Boston and to develop downtown design plans that will maximize aesthetics and unify the commercial districts.
4. Incorporate the natural amenities of the Huron River where it flows through New Boston into downtown design plans in order to maximize use of the river as a component of the commercial district as a community amenity.
5. Establish and reserve suitable land for future industrial purposes and promote the development of industrial plats rather than scattered single lot development.
6. Coordinate planning efforts of new industrial operations with the Local Development Finance Authority.

## **ROADS, SEWER, AND WATER**

**GOAL:** Balanced and orderly growth will be ensured through the provision of adequate infrastructure to protect the safety and quality of life of Township residents.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Systematically improve Township roads giving priority to roads in areas intended to support the highest concentrations of development.
2. Establish a program that results in the paving of selected roads in the Township and the maintenance of the roads system.
3. Street lighting should be in all present and future residential areas and at street intersections, where necessary.
4. Provide, where feasible and necessary, water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer services in areas of the Township identified for residential, commercial, and industrial development.
5. Protect and preserve groundwater supplies by participating in State-wide programs to monitor quality of groundwater and by establishing density standards that are consistent with the natural capacity of soils to handle on-site septic systems.

## **RURAL / AGRICULTURE**

**GOAL:** Huron Township will preserve its agrarian ancestry by preserving lands suitable for agricultural uses in the Township, and managing growth to minimize the encroachment of residential, commercial, and industrial uses into areas valued for rural purposes.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Develop zoning regulations that restrict nonfarm development in areas not served by public utilities.
2. Develop zoning regulations and utility extension policies that make lands served by utilities more attractive to develop than unserved lands.
3. Develop zoning regulations which discourage the formation of flag lots or irregularly shaped land divisions which result in a large number of acres that are not buildable, not easily serviced by public utilities, and are in some cases removed unnecessarily from agricultural production.
4. Encourage growth and development in areas presently served by public sewer and water.
5. Support and encourage Agri-Tourism business.

## COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN

**GOAL:** Development within Huron Charter Township should be designed and maintained to the highest quality that will minimize the impact on existing natural resources and develop a cohesive image for the community.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Residential development should be visually attractive and environmentally acceptable.
2. Encourage owners of businesses and structures within the business district to improve and maintain their properties in a manner that promotes the aesthetic appearance of the district.
3. Maintain and improve the infrastructure within the Village areas, such as sidewalks, lighting, parking, and other amenities.
4. Develop standards for non-residential land use, which will require a high quality of design and mitigate any negative impact those uses may have on adjacent residential areas.
5. Develop standards, which emphasize and maintain a unique character within each of the Village areas.

# Chapter 8

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## Future Land Use



The Huron Charter Township Future Land Use Plan establishes general patterns of land use to guide growth and development for the next twenty to twenty-five years. Its importance is continually reinforced, as it is frequently the first resource consulted when considering newly proposed land use changes.

The intent of the Future Land Use Plan is to foster orderly patterns of development that preserve the community's important natural features, promote high quality, and appropriately scaled residential, commercial, and industrial development, provide efficient transportation connections, and enhance quality of life for local residents.

The Huron Township Master Plan establishes general patterns of land use to guide growth and development for the next 20 to 25 years. This Plan constitutes a viable and integrated approach to accommodate the impacts of growth through the designation of land use districts. The overarching intent is to foster efficient patterns of development that preserve the community's important natural features and rural character while accommodating growth in an efficient manner. The following describes each of the future land use designations as illustrated on Map 5.

### ***Agricultural / Residential***

Development within this designation consists of the lowest density single-family residential areas in the Township. Active agricultural uses and horse farms characterize these areas. This designation supports the Township goal of rural preservation. The planned density of the Agricultural/Residential areas is 2.5 acres per unit. Sewer is typically not available in these areas, and greater densities may occur only if sewer and water is extended to the area, and if the abutting road is paved. Further, if a parcel has utilities, but abuts a gravel road, the road must be paved to achieve the Suburban Residential designation discussed below.

Although the prevalent development pattern within this area will be through land divisions, open space and conservation clustering opportunities are encouraged. Such clustering of homes should not increase overall density. The intent of clustering of homes is to minimize curb cuts along section line roads, utilize community resources wisely, and preserve natural features.

Emblematic of the Agricultural/Residential areas are single-family detached homes and farming clusters (modest single-family homes with a series of accessory structures, such as barns, silos, stables, and utility buildings). A liberal right-of-way setback of 150 feet from the centerline is expected to maintain the rural view sheds as well as open space developments, which should preserve trees lining mile roads.

The improvement of public utilities in these areas should be cautioned. These areas are not necessarily meant to be serviced by public utilities, and doing so would encourage denser development, hampering rural preservation. In an effort to maintain the rural estate atmosphere, customary subdivisions and site condominiums are discouraged in the Agricultural/Residential classification.

A conservation cluster approach to development can be used to preserve important natural features, establish open lands for walking or recreation and reduce infrastructure costs when compared to a “by right” approach to development. This hypothetical example results in about 1/3 of the site as permanent open space and nature trails, about 10% less infrastructure and two “bonus” lots.

### ***Suburban Residential***

Suburban Residential areas consist primarily of one-acre, single-family residential uses, which will either be served by public utilities or located in areas where such utilities are expected. In addition, Suburban Residential uses are intended to be located on paved roads.

Clustering and open space techniques are encouraged in this classification as a way to preserve open space and natural features within developments and adjacent to the section line roads. Open space practices should preserve trees lining mile roads, establishing a rural view shed similar to that of the Agricultural/Rural Residential designation. Additionally, when adjacent to a mile road, developments should be setback 150 feet from the centerline of the right-of-way to advance this objective.

When preservation approaches to development are used within the Suburban Residential areas, with a plan of development encompassing at least 20 acres, density may be increased up to 2 dwellings per acre. Otherwise, 1 dwelling unit per acre is anticipated.

### ***Village***

Future development in the area should aim to foster a vibrant and dynamic urban environment, accommodating a mix of high-density commercial, retail, and residential uses. Village areas are planned to occur near residential areas to maximize accessibility and connectivity, acting as a focal point for economic activities within the township.

These uses should be designed in a manner that exemplifies the overall character and image of the Township and immediate area. Future uses in the area should also utilize mixed use strategies, such as commercial spaces on ground floors of buildings with residential space allocated on the floor(s) above. High quality building materials such as brick, stone, and natural siding should be used on Village buildings. Shared parking areas are preferred between developments, so as to provide as much space as possible for natural features such as street trees and landscaping to enhance the visual appeal of the area. Signage within the area should be designed to match the character of the buildings, and not to create nuisances for pedestrians and drivers. Pedestrian paths and connections between uses should be included for new developments when appropriate.

### ***Medium Density Residential***

This classification is meant to establish residential dwellings at a density not to exceed 6 units per acre. These uses are intended to provide affordable housing for young families, the elderly and

young professionals, and to function as a transition from lower density residential uses to more intense uses. Medium Density Residential uses will be serviced by public utilities and should concentrate near shopping and other services. There are presently three types of existing development included in this designation mobile home parks and attached condominium and rental developments.

Additional manufactured housing is not consistent with the goals of this classification, so areas designated as Medium Density Residential are not intended for further manufactured housing development. However, attached single-family owner or renter occupied units are planned to emerge here.

Open space to provide recreational opportunities should be incorporated in the new development and shall include pedestrian walkways, and small community parks. Woodlots and open space preservation areas are to be properly maintained, and appropriate landscaping should be created to adequately buffer this use from other residential uses.

### ***Neighborhood Commercial***

Concentrating residents within neighborhoods generates a need for convenience commercial services. These small-scale uses serve the adjacent residential areas. These areas should generate less automobile traffic than other commercial uses in the Township, and convenient and safe pedestrian access to buildings is expected. It is anticipated that the neighborhood commercial areas will provide most of the daily commercial needs of the residents of Huron Township. Primary examples of uses include ice cream shops, dry cleaners, and banks. Public utilities will serve these uses.

The development of sprawling strip commercial uses is to be avoided. Because these commercial uses serve the adjacent neighborhoods, the building types and designs should reflect the architectural character of the adjacent neighborhoods. Quality building materials such as brick, stone, and natural siding should be used on Neighborhood Commercial buildings.

Parking areas should be located at the rear of buildings and properly buffered from adjacent residential uses. Buildings are to face the street and front and side yard setbacks should be minimal to continue the “main street” atmosphere of the Villages. Signage is to be minimal and low-impact lighting is anticipated to connect with the intended pedestrian-scale atmosphere.

### ***Highway Commercial***

This planned use will serve the needs of motorists traveling I-275 but is primarily intended for residents of the Township. Developments are not expected to be of a regional scale, though stores will generally be larger than Neighborhood Commercial uses and should border the expressway. Commercial uses such as restaurants, hotels, grocery, and retail developments are anticipated, though “big box” stores greater than 35,000 square feet are not desired. Uses should not compete with any regional facilities located in such adjacent communities as Romulus, Brownstown Township, Taylor, Van Buren Township, Westland, Flat Rock, or Canton Township.

Access points in the Freeway Service Commercial designation are to be coordinated with neighboring uses to minimize traffic conflicts and increase safety for consumers. Additionally, pedestrian paths and connections with the Villages and other dense nodes of residential developments should be included in site plans, where possible.

Site plan design criteria should be developed for this designation. Such special regulations should include signage, lighting, landscaping, access management, building design, and should also relate to views from I-275. A consistent, high-quality impression will be established in these areas.

Freeway Service Commercial is planned to occur on parcels abutting I-275 at Sibley Road, South Huron Road, and Will Carleton Road. Sewer and water service is requisite for these relatively intense uses.

### ***Pinnacle Development Center***

This area is most directly impacted by the airport improvements. Much of the land is currently owned by Wayne County as a result of their Noise Mitigation Project, and conceptual plans for the Pinnacle have been underway for some time. It offers an excellent opportunity to capture uses that will contribute significantly to the tax base of Huron Township.

It is essential that the development occurring within the Regional Center respect the character of Huron Township. Preserving the rural character and image of Huron Township must continue to be the focus of development even in this area. Extensive natural landscaping must be used along the major road frontages such as Sibley and Vining to protect the character of this area and to provide a consistent image entering New Boston. Sibley Road must be upgraded to a divided four-lane boulevard with a landscaped median from I-275 to Vining Road.

A combination of high technology, office, transportation, industrial, commercial, and open space uses should be designed and built in a high-quality manner, establishing Huron Township as an appealing destination within the airport area. Site design criteria for this area is to include, but is not limited to, signage, landscaping, lighting, access control, and building design.

Partnering with Wayne County to ensure quality development is obligatory in enhancing this region of Huron. The Township should take advantage of opportunities while considering the goal of preservation.

### ***Industrial***

Industrial uses in the Township have progressed into lighter, more compatible practices. Building design and site development is to be analogous to high-quality office developments. Uses allowed under this designation include heavy and light industrial facilities. Sewer and water service is mandatory.

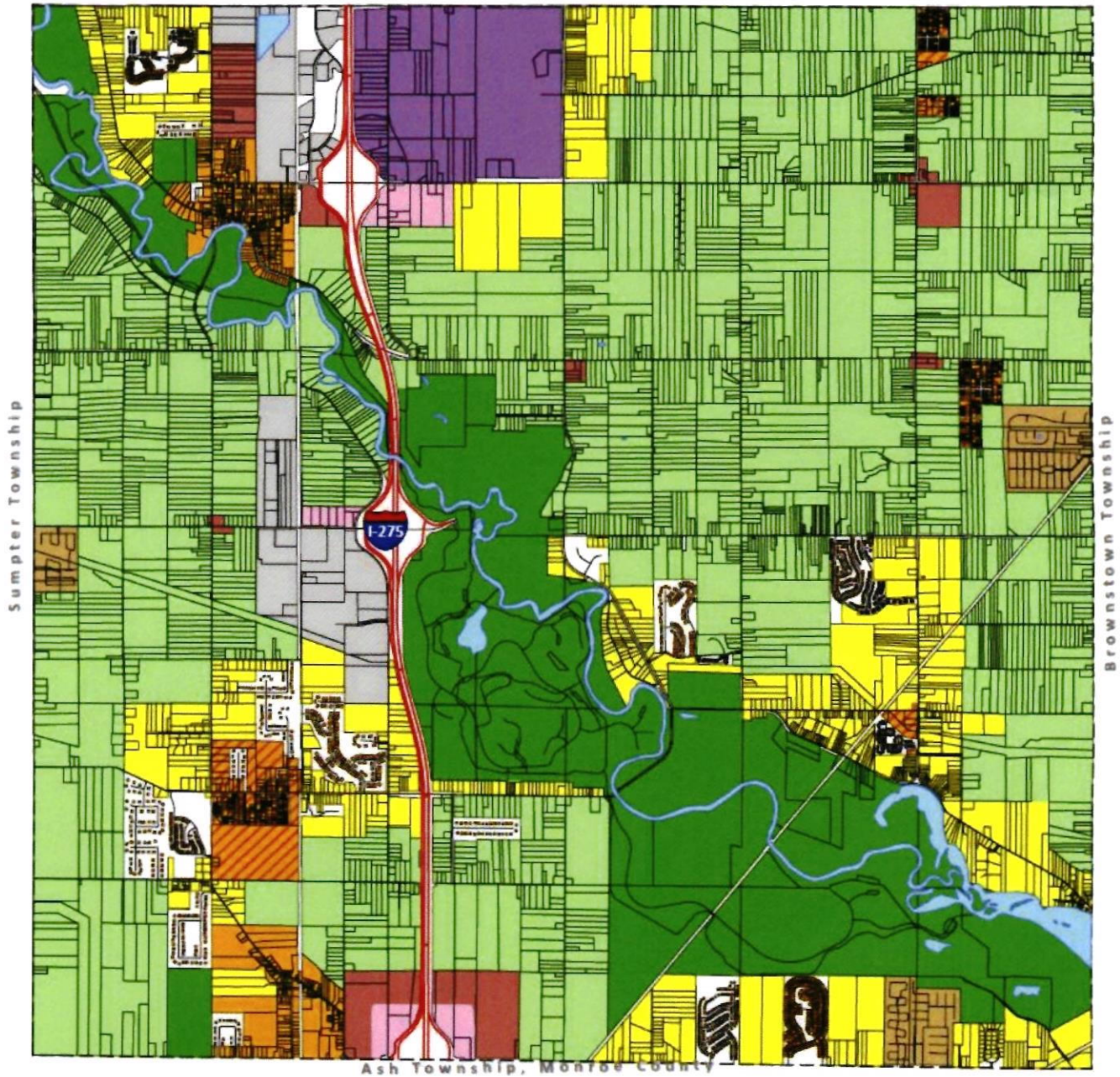
When at all possible, natural features in these areas are to be preserved, especially when such preservation buffers industry from neighboring uses and mitigates industrial effects. Site design criteria shall include signage, landscaping, lighting, access control and building design. Pedestrian pathways and connections to the Villages are desired where practical, to provide for alternative modes of transportation to and from work.

Other high quality design standards should persist in Industrial areas, especially where facilities are visible from public roads, 1-275, and major arterial roads. Loading areas should be located at the rear of buildings. The sides and front facades of the buildings visible from the road should be designed with high quality building materials such as stone, brick, and other natural materials. Landscaping should be used to augment the natural impression found in Huron Township.

Industrial and truck traffic should be directed away from residential neighborhoods. A truck route should be developed in conjunction with neighboring municipalities to ensure industrial and truck traffic, both local and that which crosses municipal boundaries, does not unfavorably affect quality of life in residential areas. In addition, as an element of site plan approval for industrial uses, a truck route may be required.

# MAP 5 HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP FUTURE LAND USE

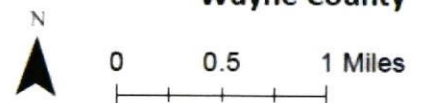
City of Romulus



### Future Land Use

	Agricultural Residential		Commercial Pinnacle
	Highway Commercial		Development Center Public /
	Industrial		Semi-Public
	Medium Density Residential		Suburban Residential
	Multiple Family Neighborhood		Village

### Future Land Use Map Huron Charter Township Wayne County



December 6, 2023  
Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.  
Ann Arbor, Michigan



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# Chapter 9

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# Implementation



In order for the Future Land Use Plan to serve as an effective guide for the continued development and enhancement of Huron Township, it must be implemented. Primary responsibility for implementing the Plan rests with the Huron Township Board of Trustees, the Planning Commission, and the Township staff. This is done through a number of methods, which include ordinances, programs, and administrative procedures, such as site plan review, which are described in this chapter.

The private sector is also involved in fulfilling the recommendations of the Master Plan by the actual physical development of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. The authority for guiding this, however, comes from the Township. Cooperation between the public and private sectors is therefore important in successful implementation of the Master Plan.

## 1. EVALUATE AND REVISE THE ZONING ORDINANCE

**Description.** The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation mechanism for this Plan. In many of the strategies, reference is made to evaluations and updates of the Ordinance to conform to this Plan. This strategy contemplates a complete evaluation of the entire Ordinance including all of the other, more specific, recommendations included in this Master Plan. This will include a revision of the Zoning Map to support the Future Land Use Map, and a revision of some zoning classifications to better conform to the future land use designations in this Master Plan. In addition, the Ordinance should be evaluated for flexibility to address innovative development techniques and for its ability to manage inefficient development patterns. In this connection, the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to permit open space in all districts such that flexible, open space development becomes the norm in the Township as opposed to the traditional, sometimes inefficient, subdivision of land.

Through zoning, the Township will discourage sprawling strip development, which leads to long-term traffic capacity problems and becomes repellant for pedestrians. The Township will update its landscaping requirements to augment the natural features in the community, to increase the number of trees, and to incorporate natural amenities already existing where development is expected to occur. In residential districts, flag lots and other irregularly shaped parcels will be discouraged, to preserve usable farmland, and to make use of utilities efficient.

**Responsibilities.** The Planning Commission and Staff may implement this strategy. This is an extensive task, and it is likely that outside support will be needed. Any resulting amendments to the Ordinance will require review by the Township’s legal staff and ultimately the adoption of the Township Board.

## 2. VILLAGE DESIGN

**Description.** High-quality development should be encouraged by way of Ordinance for the Village areas. By expanding on the existing quality of life in the Villages (i.e., walkability, historic character) the Ordinance could be amended to regulate design and architectural elements of new and remodeled facilities. This would spearhead efforts to develop these Villages into primary local destinations, enhancing the Township overall. With people from the metropolis visiting the Township for the Metroparks, the Villages should serve as mixed-use commercial, service, entertainment, and social points of interest for residents and tourists.

Such an implementation strategy would assist the Village commercial areas, and with balanced regulation, could promote economic development, wide sidewalks, window-shopping, inviting landscaping, shade trees, and the preservation of other areas in the Township. In addition to commercial areas, this strategy will also include the formation and implementation of a long-range plan to create non-motorized connections among residential and civic uses within the Village areas. Street trees, street illumination, and historic preservation programs are also elements of this implementation strategy.

**Responsibilities.** The Planning Commission will take the lead in implementing this effort. The Road Commission and all property owners should participate. To maintain the momentum of the effort, outside urban design and land use planning consulting support should be considered.

## 3. DEVELOP A PROGRAM FOR NATURAL BUFFERS AND SCENIC EASEMENTS

**Description.** Developing mechanisms to encourage and require scenic easements and natural buffers within developments will enhance open space and maintain a rural character.

The Township could use its Planned Unit Development and Open Space Planned Development Districts as a mechanism to provide for natural area buffers while preserving the right of property owners to realize an appropriate yield from their lands. The Zoning Ordinance will be evaluated for the flexibility to promote the preservation of open lands and natural area buffers, especially along roadways, to enhance scenic and natural view sheds.

In addition to buffers and open lands, this strategy will also include the formation and implementation of a long-range plan to create non-motorized connections between neighborhoods, subdivisions, villages, activity centers, parks, municipal facilities, and schools. These pathways will help to relieve some of the traffic and vehicle/pedestrian conflicts at critical intersections. More importantly, they will add a further amenity to the Huron Township area.

Also, the City of Romulus has developed a pathway plan to accommodate non-motorized connections, including several connections with Huron Township and the Metro Park. The Township may also encourage connections with Romulus to assist in establishing an inter-

municipal trail system, which would augment quality of life in the region.

**Responsibilities.** The Planning staff should take the lead in preparing the standards for natural buffers. However, additional support may be desirable when landowners or developers select to use conservation easements. The Township Planning staff should coordinate with consultants who specialize in trail way planning for a regional network of natural areas particularly relating to non-motorized recreational facilities.

#### 4. IMPROVE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT BENEFITS

**Description.** The Township will prepare a program of public service announcements, informational brochures available for public dissemination, informational sessions held by the Township Board, and school curriculum on the importance of the careful management of the Township's open lands, critical natural areas, and remaining farmlands. The theme may be directed at explaining that it is possible and desirable to have both development and rural character, but effective management is needed. A speaker's bureau could be started, which would periodically target service clubs, neighborhood and community organizations, and other interest groups in describing the balance between economic development and environmental preservation.

**Responsibilities.** The support and involvement of the public, along with Township staff, may provide in-kind support in bringing data and resources together and in continually reinforcing the theme with the general population and with school-age children.

#### 5. INVENTORY KEY NATURAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES

**Description.** A key aspect of the Township's Master Plan is the preservation of the natural beauty and significant environmental features of the community. The purpose of this strategy is to prepare an inventory of important natural features and to identify the likely trends or conditions that may threaten them.

Growth and increasing demands placed upon natural resources have had the effect of encroaching upon, despoiling or eliminating many of the trees, other forms of vegetation, and natural resources and processes associated with woodlands. An inventory of these resources would be a first step in their protection.

Wetlands are another natural resource that provides benefits to the entire community beyond the understanding of many individuals. The State of Michigan only regulates and protects wetlands larger than 5 acres. Once an inventory has identified the wetland resources, the Township should explore a local ordinance geared to supplement the State law.

Using automated or manual mapping, the Township may develop a set of mapped exhibits that would serve as a guide to future land use decisions. In some areas, it may be appropriate to develop overlay zoning or other preservation mechanisms. These inventories must eventually be field-verified, and with modern global positioning systems (GPS) and geographic information systems (GIS) this process can be accomplished fairly efficiently. In addition, as private property owners submit site plans for consideration, independent and professionally prepared natural features determinations may be collected for incorporation into this inventory.

Standards for the preservation of such features will need to be developed which are effective, yet which permit some reasonable use of private lands in Huron Township. These would be structured to permit proposed buildings to be shifted on a site to preserve features. In some instances, the best mechanism for preservation is acquisition. The Township should work with Southeast Michigan environmental groups to build a larger trust for this purpose.

**Responsibilities.** The Planning staff should take the lead in preparing the inventory. Outside support from environmental experts may be needed in structuring a consistent approach to completing the inventory and to complete wetlands designation work.

## 6. DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE UTILITY POLICY

**Description.** Policies that direct the location of public water, road improvements, storm water, and sanitary sewer services often have the effect of driving growth. A Township policy is to encourage new development to connect to existing or proposed utilities. The Township desires to improve utilities into areas of the community where growth would be advantageous. It is a goal of the Township to centralize residential growth around the existing Village areas. In order for this technique to be effective, the Township must recognize that capacity limitations exist for both public water and sanitary sewer systems.

The capacity issue is relevant in terms of growth management, especially as anticipated development occurs throughout the Township.

The Township desires to have a more significant role in the process of creating regulations for County utilities and seeks to have greater say in a maintenance program of County drains, which would ultimately be developed by the County.

**The provision of sanitary sewers and water service to existing and future growth areas is a major concern in the township.**

**Responsibilities.** Township staff may assume lead responsibility for this policy. The Township will need to continue and expand its efforts in conjunction with the County as the entire community works to expand storm water capacity.

## 7. ESTABLISH REGIONAL CENTER POLICIES

**Description.** In cooperation with Wayne County and the City of Romulus, the Township should spearhead the establishment of guidelines to guarantee quality development in the Regional Center area. Quite possibly, a unique Planned Unit Development designation should be placed in this area to provide flexibility for the County, while enabling the Township to have some influence in landscaping, lighting, amenities, and architectural standards.

In addition, this strategy recognizes that the Township will experience significantly increased traffic along Sibley Road, Merriman Road, Prescott Road, Wahrman Road, and Pennsylvania Road, when development in this area comes to fruition. This increased traffic will foster growth and development pressures along other roadways near the I-275 interchange. Land use policies may govern and direct the types of uses to be encouraged, but the form of some uses should also be directed through a corridor plan. This would take the form of a set of development standards that may be instituted through an overlay zone, consistent Planned Unit Development standards and designations, or similar mechanisms. The purpose will be to establish harmonious and complementary standards for building elevations, landscaping, lighting, access management, view shed protection, and related elements of design. The first step will be to develop the corridor plan generally and then identify appropriate mechanisms to implement it. Also, a truck route should be established in conjunction with the City of Romulus to ensure that industrial and truck traffic associated with the Regional Center does not lessen quality of life in residential areas.

**Responsibilities.** The Planning Commission will take the lead in implementing this effort. The Wayne County Road Commission and other agencies from the County, the City of Romulus, and affected Township property owners should participate. To maintain the momentum of the effort, outside consulting support should be considered before development plans move any further, to assist in land use law and airport-related development research, and design standards.